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CURRENT COMMENT.

THE Italian Premier, Mussolini, by putting impossible exactions upon the Greek Government, has deliberately forced a *casus belli*. His primary purpose in so doing is quite obviously that of consolidating his own political position at home. He has made a bare-faced, larcenous and unprovoked grab of three islands which give strategic control of the Adriatic; and a move like this is always popular. His pretext is the old familiar one—the murder of some nationals of more or less conspicuous standing, by some person or persons unknown. Such was the pretext that brought on a general European war in 1914; such was the pretext that brought about “intervention” in China and in Mexico, and that sanctioned the wholesale grab of Morocco by the French.

It is mighty queer that these murders are all so admirably timed, and that nobody ever gets to know just how they come about. They really seem to be part of the regular technique of international diplomacy. Where “backward peoples” are concerned, as in China, missionaries are usually the victims. We all remember the jubilant exuberance of von Bülow's declaration at the time of the Germans' grab of Kiaow-Chow, that it was “the first time that the damned missionaries were ever good for anything.” In other cases, however, the murder of missionaries would hardly be a strong enough pretext to carry such extravagant demands as the infringing Power can make if the victims are more important persons. The instigation of all these murders, however, for some reason, almost always remains an insoluble mystery. The instigation of the murder at Sarajevo is now clear; it became clear almost, one might say, by accident. But how about the murder of Jaurès, and a hundred others?

BROTHER MUSSOLINI, however, has stirred up a nice mess. Greece has been too heavily bled by Mr. Lloyd George and M. Venizelos to put up much of a fight on her own; but Yugoslavia, which from birth has lived in nervous fear of Italy, and which has some sort of understanding with Greece, may step in and lend a hand. In that case there is likely to be a considerable and pretty general fracas, for Hungary is sore at the loss of terri-

tory, and there are no end of other old scores to be settled and no end of new nationalist adventures to be attempted, as a result of the re-apportionments made at Versailles among the Danube States. A great deal depends upon France; for Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Yugoslavia and Rumania are really, for practical purposes, a French gendarmerie. Yet the French Government is in an awkward position. It is against French interest to let Italy get an impregnable stand in the Adriatic; but, on the other hand, an offended Italy can be pretty unpleasant about the Ruhr; and there, as Mr. Dooley said, ye ar-re.

FURTHERMORE, the French hold on Yugoslavia isn't so tight either, y' understand, that it can be counted on to squeeze out all nationalist sentiments at its own will, especially the sentiment of fear. Yugoslavia contemplates Italian control of the Adriatic much as Connecticut might regard New York State's control of Long Island Sound if New York were in any sense a rival Power. Quite possibly, therefore, assuming that France will do her best to call off Yugoslavia—and we think she will really do her level best—Yugoslavia may decline to be called off. Other assurances and commitments may by this time have been secretly exchanged among the Danube States, other plans may have been extemporized in face of this emergency, that in their outcome may break up French control in those regions, or at least greatly impair it. All this, however, is pure conjecture. The state of the case is such that we can only canvass its possibilities with our readers and give them our conjecture and opinion, on the understanding that it is only opinion and that by the time this paper is in their hands it may be proven wholly erroneous.

OUR guess, which is only a guess, is that there will be no general European war arising out of this incident either now or for some time to come, and that if there be a general Balkan-Italian scrimmage, it will be pretty sharply localized; but we do not look for even this latter contingency to arise. Our notion is that the Italians will be allowed to keep their loot uncontested, that Yugoslavia will be quieted by some sort of guarantee from the French; that Italian control of the Adriatic will not be used to the prejudice of Yugoslavia's interests; and that Greece will be allowed to suffer. Our reason for thus thinking is that at present no one stands to gain from a general European war, and nobody wants one. With the break-up of the balance of power, this Italian adventure is no more than one of the pieces of minor brigandage that must periodically occur when the major Powers, except France, are all too weak or too preoccupied to make them hazardous. We do not set much store by the incident, though we do not set forth our opinion in the guise of prophecy. One thing, however, is certain: this marauding enterprise will go down in the books as one more item in the score that must some time be settled, or rather redistributed, by war.

ONE beneficent result which may proceed from this imbroglio is that Americans may get from it once more a competent measure of that prize and banner humbug, the League of Nations, and that they may also envisage more favourably a policy of strict isolation as long as Europe

prefers to have its politics go on in this way. Greece's appeal to the League of Nations, and Italy's prompt refusal to recognize the League's decisions, will surely reduce the deliberations of this untoward body to the level of farce-comedy. The position of this paper has always been, and still is, that a dead market in Europe is a bad thing for the United States, a precious bad thing indeed, and we shall begin before long to feel the pinch of it very keenly. Nevertheless, bad as it is, it is in our judgment better for us and for all concerned than any form of intervention or interference in European affairs until European nationalisms and imperialisms have had their dance out. If any one could show us that our Government could promote one single good purpose, or indeed accomplish anything but making a bad matter worse, by joining the League of Nations or otherwise intervening in European affairs at this juncture or at any time since the Versailles conference, we would reconsider our opinions with the greatest satisfaction; but no one has as yet done this or seriously tried to do it.

ONE of the most interesting offerings of the week is a dispatch forwarded from Berlin by Mr. Lincoln Eyre, a special correspondent of the New York *Herald*. According to Mr. Eyre, the British Government has signified its willingness to support the Rhineland separatists if they in their turn will sign over the city of Cologne to British control in perpetuity. The source of the report is not disclosed, and at first glance one is disposed to think that its value is about on a par with that of the German mark. We have recently been led to believe that it is the policy of the British Government to play close to the Government at Berlin, and to strengthen Germany against French aggression; and certainly the encouragement of the separatist movement will not fortify German resistance or make for Anglo-German friendship.

HOWEVER, Mr. Eyre says specifically that the representatives of Downing Street have not denied the report that they have been engaged in negotiations of one sort or another with the separatists. These proceedings, of course, constitute a flagrant violation of international law, and the report of them will be enough to cool the ardour and dampen the expectations of official Germany. It is hardly to be expected that the British would allow such a report to circulate, unrepudiated, unless they had already seen their way clear to profit by the separatist movement. With the special information that it has at its command, the British Government may have concluded that the success of the movement is inevitable. If such were the belief at London, the Government would naturally hope to see the new State established under British auspices, and thus converted into a counterweight for Belgium. The city of Cologne, and the Rhine Republic generally, might be made to serve the old need for a bridge-head on the Continent, and the hoped-for check upon French expansion might still be realized in this new and unexpected quarter.

A SPECIAL Committee of the Bar Association has been gathering statistics on crime in the United States, which are directly at variance with recent optimistic conclusions of Mr. Roy A. Haynes, Federal Prohibition Commissioner. According to Mr. Haynes, prohibition "has materially cut down the populations of State penal farms, prisons and almshouses, releasing thousands of citizens for useful work." It is true that Mr. Haynes failed to cite any general statistics in support of his statement about this increase of virtue; and, curiously enough, he contented himself with giving a few figures from the State of Michigan, which is not conspicuously dry territory.

The Committee of the Bar Association, however, in contending that the population of our penal institutions shows a steady increase, is well primed with statistical data. According to its figures, the number of inmates in such institutions throughout the United States has grown 16.6 per cent in twelve years, while the general population has increased less than fifteen per cent. Moreover, conspicuously "wet" States, like New Jersey and Maryland, are exceptions to the general rule. Their inmates of prisons and the like are steadily decreasing in numbers. The brethren who believe in making people abstainers and bringing on the millennium by legislative fiat may get what comfort they may out of these figures. In our opinion they can find precious little; and we believe the statistics embody an excellent lesson both for professional reformers and for persons who would make a fetish of statutory law.

THE New York *Times* of 3 September prints an interview with a Californian who says that the city of Long Beach is the only city in the country without taxes. The city has a natural resource of 200 gushing oil-wells that takes care of all municipal expense and leaves the citizens tax-free. This fact, if such it be, is worth mention for the sake of remarking that every community in the country has a communal asset that would take care of its taxes in an analogous way, namely: the site-value of land. Let people freely hold and keep, buy, sell and bequeath, all the land they like; but let them pay to the community the full annual rent of that land, instead of putting it in their own pockets. One must speak with due deference in calling attention to the errors of the Physiocrats, even in matters of terminology, but it was a mistake for them to call this plan *l'impôt unique*, or the single tax. The essence of this plan is that under it a community does not live on taxes at all, not even on one single tax. It lives exclusively on rent, the rent of its natural resources; and the rent would be determined under that plan, just as it now is, by a landlord's valuation based on what amounts to free competitive bidding.

FEDERAL JUDGE WOODROUGH's decision upholding the seizure of a British vessel caught transferring a cargo of liquor eight miles from shore, strikes us as being bad law and bad sense. In one way it is a good thing, as being one more piece of evidence of the flimsiness of international law. It illustrates the great truth that no nation pays any attention to international law or agreement if it feels itself strong enough to disregard them. But a little decent scrupulousness on our part just now, would go far. We know, of course, that we are the chosen people and that foreigners are only dagoes and frogs and Johnny Bulls, and they owe us money, and all that sort of thing. Still, *noblesse oblige*; and for the sake of our own self-respect, it would seem better for our Government to observe the conventions, and not act like a posse of lynching, law-breaking fanatics, if it can help it. The Europeans can not come over here and thrash us into decent, law-abiding behaviour, but is not the fact that they are just now poorer and weaker than we are a pretty good reason why we should be a little extra careful of their feelings?

INASMUCH as our national committeemen and other professional pulse-feelers are now on the lookout for candidates for public office, and especially for the Presidency, we take pleasure in reproducing for their information and guidance the very finest set of specifications for the perfect politician that we have ever seen. We marvel that this characterization was worked out fifty years ago, in a country that has not even yet had very much experience with political bamboozling and blandish-

ment; but here, nevertheless, is the passage as it stands in the second volume of Turgenev's "Virgin Soil": "On one side, he [our politician] commended the conservatives, on the other approved of the liberals, awarding some preference to the latter, reckoning himself among their number; he extolled the people, but referred to some of their weak points; expressed complete confidence in the Government, but asked himself whether *all* subordinate officials were fully carrying out its benevolent designs. . . . He looked toward the east; first rejoiced, then was dubious: looked toward the west; first was apathetic, then suddenly waked up! Finally he proposed a toast in honour of the trinity: 'Religion, Agriculture, and Industry.'" Thus, having said a great deal of nothing-at-all, he concluded a speech that would return him to almost any parliament in Christendom, and leave him scot-free to do what he pleased when he got there.

"ADMIRATION" is the most prominent word on a poster now displayed in subways, tramways, and suburban trains, in and around New York City. The card exhibits the picture of a young woman surrounded by a circle of attentive youths, and experience leads one to suppose that the advertiser is attempting to develop a market for some new aid to beauty. A reading of the advertisement therefore brings a genuine surprise: "Admiration is man's tribute to the woman who can fairly and accurately discuss *both sides* of important questions. *The Literary Digest*." For people who are worrying about the problem of marriage and divorce, there may be a valuable suggestion hidden away in this piece of advertising. The Bureau of the Census at Washington has just announced that in the eight States for which the compilation has been completed, the number of divorces for 1922 exceeded the number for 1916 by 3060, while the number of marriages had fallen off by 10,570; and yet the *Literary Digest* is beginning to advertise intellectual qualities in the same way that cosmetics are advertised, as an element of sex-attraction. The advocates of indissoluble monogamy might perhaps accomplish something worth while if they would put more emphasis on congeniality as a prerequisite to marriage, and leave off trying to enforce the maintenance of uncongenial relations once established.

THE only way to dispose finally of a nuisance is, we suppose, to educate people away from it. For example, if it did not pay to load up the walls of buildings and the slopes of the mountains of the Lord with billboards—if people in general were really repelled by this sort of advertising, instead of being attracted and persuaded by it, then the advertisers would pretty soon find it out, and we should have an end, eventually, of this particular abomination. In New York City the sign-builders are pushing the educational process at a great rate, and there is hope that the popular revulsion will not be indefinitely postponed. In its most recent development, the billboard-business takes the form of walling up the face of a building, and covering it up with columns of paint by day, and columns of fire by night. The centre of all such doings is Times Square, where a sign twenty-five feet high and a half-block long has just been plastered across the face of a large building, at the level of the second story. This sign will block out the light and air from all the rooms immediately behind it, but (because people in general like this sort of thing and respond to its persuasion) the rent paid for the space is expected to make good the loss.

WITH the barbarous German war still on their hands, the French can yet find time occasionally to demonstrate their pretension to be the most civilized among the peoples. One such demonstration was occasioned recently

by the centenary of the birth of Louis Pasteur; and certainly it is remarkable how completely the French papers and magazines were dominated at the time of the celebration by the personality of this great man. It is to be remembered of course that Pasteur was a devout Catholic; and now in a period of reviving clericalism, he is in process of creation into a kind of lay saint. But when all due allowance is made for this circumstance, so favourable to his fame, we can not recall another such demonstration as that in which the French people have recently been engaged. There have been other national saints' days in plenty, but the object of devotion has usually been a ruler or a general, a representative of barbarian strength or barbarian brutality, rather than a simple and civilized man inquiring after truth.

SOME of the icons of the Kremlin churches at Moscow have recently been subjected to a restorative process that reverses the history of religious art in Russia. In many instances, the work of restoration has resulted in the re-discovery of primitive paintings that have been buried for an æon or so beneath layers of paint applied by artists of the more recent past. According to a dispatch to the *New York Times*, some of the earlier pictures are representative of Byzantine painting of the eleventh century. It is this period that such distinguished historians as M. Charles Diehl have called the golden age of Byzantine art; and it was precisely at this time, when civilization was at its lowest ebb in the West, that Old Russia established its closest contact with the Mediterranean world. Before long the connecting trade-route was almost completely blocked by new invasions from Asia, but the re-discovery of these ancient paintings comes as a reminder that at that time the stream of civilization had already passed north-eastward from Byzantium, as it passed north-west from Rome. It is well enough that our attention should be recalled to this fact, for the Western peoples have found it easy to forget that Eastern Europe shares with them in the heritage of the classical world.

THE excellent English critic, Mr. Ernest Newman, is out for a plan to set up a library of old music that should do for the student what the Loeb library of Greek and Russian classics was intended to do for the reader whose knowledge of Greek and Latin is imperfect. This is really a splendid idea, and Mr. Newman makes it the basis of an appeal to "some millionaire of musical instincts, to do something really useful for the art"; an appeal which we cordially second. Nothing could be more useful than to "give every one the chance to study the evolution of music for himself, instead of having, for the most part, to take his opinions on obscure points from the very few historians who have had an opportunity to study the originals." Such a library, however, should be done much better than the Loeb library has, as a whole, been done. Before the Loeb library appeared, one would not use the Bohn library if one could manage French enough to get through the translations of M. Nisard; and so now, the Loeb library stands up very shakily beside the translations of the Association Guillaume Budé.

The editors can not be responsible for manuscripts submitted, but if return postage be enclosed, they will do all in their power to see that rejected manuscripts are returned promptly.

It is not to be understood that articles signed with a name, pseudonym, or initials necessarily agree with the opinion of the editors, either in substance or style. They are printed because, in the editors' judgment, they are intrinsically worth reading.

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TOPICS OF THE TIME.

THE ROW AT TANGIER.

THE question of Morocco still bedevils the European diplomats, even though German aspirations have been decently buried. For some months the French and British and Spanish Governments have been indulging in a fine old three-handed row over control of the port of Tangier, with its minute strip of hinterland which at its widest point does not run back from the coast more than ten miles. A conference in June among representatives of the three Governments broke up without reaching any agreement on the disputed territory, and another meeting of "experts" was scheduled to be called about the beginning of September. Meanwhile, as is usual in such cases, charges of secret double-dealing among the rival Governments have cropped out in the press.

When Morocco was divided between France and Spain, Tangier was left as an open door, to be administered under the native Sultan, with the representatives of the three Powers as "advisers." In other words, it was more or less vaguely internationalized. The little knob of territory, embedded in the Spanish zone, is not in itself important; but with Gibraltar it commands the entrance to the Mediterranean, it has a harbour of great possibilities, and as railways are constructed and western Africa is opened to development, the city and the port will perhaps have a relation to that great hinterland as significant as the relation of Constantinople to Asia Minor. It is for these reasons that the three Powers are squabbling over this particular spot on the map.

The French Government controls seven-eighths of the Moroccan territory, and the Sultan serves as a convenient rubber stamp for the French Administration. In the Spanish zone the authority is vested in a viceroy who serves as a figurehead for the struggling Spanish regime. All three Powers are agreed that the Sultan is the sole rightful sovereign in Tangier, but they differ about the application of his sovereignty. The French Government would have its puppet monarch rule directly; the Spanish Government holds out for a regime under its viceroy; the British Government insists that the authority be exercised through an international commission. Under the guise of a Council of Health, the consuls of the three Powers, sitting at Tangier, have gradually assumed most of the functions of administration, and their constant rivalries and quarrels among themselves, as well as their bickerings with the Sultan, keep the affairs of the district in a chaotic state.

Before the war an international company was formed to build a port that would measure up to the future of Tangier. German and Austrian interests participated in this enterprise. The outbreak of the war postponed actual work, but two years ago the project was revived. It was then discovered that during the conflict the Sultan had appropriated to his Government the German and Austrian shares in the business, thus giving the French Government and its protectorate a controlling interest; and under these majority-auspices it was arranged that the control of the port should revert to the Maghzen, as the Sultan's Administration is called. Under such circumstances the British and Spanish Governments were reluctant to dump any money into the port, and the improvement-scheme faded from view. Both Powers declared that the French arrangement was in violation of the agreement for international control, and the British press

has denounced with considerable bitterness what it calls the underhand methods of the French Government. On the other hand, French editors have been asserting that the British Government has made a secret dicker with the Spaniards to place the district under the Spanish Government's puppet viceroy, and thereby squeeze out the French Government from its share in the benefits and emoluments that accrue from the management of this important gateway.

In this atmosphere of recriminations and distrust the diplomats have been unable to approach a settlement. Where practical interests are involved it is obvious that none of the three Governments concerned has a farthing's worth of faith in the others. The whole disreputable affair is a fresh indication that the war left the political Governments of Europe bankrupt even of that honour which is said to obtain among bandits of a lesser sort.

ST. KARL VERSUS ST. GEORGE.

THE conservative London *Spectator*, with commendable generosity, has recently placed its columns at the disposal of Mr. H. W. Massingham, former editor of the London *Nation*, for a series of articles setting forth Mr. Massingham's conception of the progressive spirit in politics. In this novel forum Mr. Massingham has held forth with his usual grace and urbanity, though scarcely with the emotional fervour which blazed in some of his oppositionist leaders in the old *Nation*. His point of view is that in British politics, the Liberal party has had its day and no longer represents any vital force in British life. His own allegiance has passed from it; and he makes a plea for the Labour party and socialism, in which he believes lies salvation, as far as the immediate future of Britain is concerned.

In respect to the Liberal party, Mr. Massingham is convincing enough. As time goes on, it is apparent that the party is one of the casualties of the war. In most of the by-elections its following has shown a startling decline; and even though the present Conservative Government finds itself in a most humiliating position, with its prestige in Europe at the lowest ebb, the Liberal party is utterly unable to capitalize the situation to its own advantage. The party seems wholly without inspiration, either in the faction led by a discredited political mountebank, or the faction led by an elderly routineer.

While the Conservative party represents faithfully the static element in British society, Mr. Massingham concludes that it can not accommodate its policy to the inevitable transformation demanded by changing conditions. The Labour party and socialism alone are competent to "bring lasting peace, higher general culture, a happier and healthier population"; in short, to compose a new order. He looks back wistfully upon the enforced State-socialism of the war-time emergency, when "the State fixed prices and frowned on profiteering; the poor men never so well fed, the rich never so temperate, while the idea of public service, which is the basis of socialism, helped to unite and humanize our society." This is an engaging picture, but we suspect it is tinted rosily by Mr. Massingham's bias of theory. Certainly it bears no likeness to the dolorous reality in our own country, when the profiteer reaped a golden harvest, while the Government, swollen with authority, bulldozed and robbed the general population while it drugged the public mind with the most unscrupulous mendacities. To Americans this image of Mr. Massingham's will appear alto-

gether unhappy; it will revive memories that are dismal indeed. It will lead many of us to read on somewhat sceptically to his description of the New Socialism as "a religious idea, drawing part at least of its sustenance from the spirit of Christianity. It is also a definite plea for the organization of public life."

It is when Mr. Massingham tackles the application of his idea that he retreats at once, with apologies, into the hinterland of political generalities. He is at great pains to assure Mr. St. Loe Strachey's clientele that the British Labour party is unalterably opposed to catastrophic socialism, and under no circumstances would it be inclined "to follow Lenin & Co. to the brink of perdition." Probably under the circumstances that assurance is fair enough, but the rest of Mr. Massingham's exposition is a mere elaboration of the thesis that the new order he contemplates would not disturb the old order in any respect. "No Christian, or few Christians," he declares, "dream of an instant, literal application of the Sermon on the Mount. In the same way, only socialists caught up in the mingled enthusiasm and fury of a revolutionary hour, would contemplate a socialist kingdom brought in by violence and realized all at once. The [Labour] party itself is the child, born in due time and none too early, not of revolution, but of trade unionism, of co-operation, of Liberalism—all three progressive, anti-catastrophic movements. Most of its leaders are practical politicians, breathing our native air of compromise and arrangement." Again: "The Labour party is no new thing, it is a slip of democracy, grafted on the good old stock whence Reform Bills innumerable have proceeded, and will proceed to the end of time." Its temper, Mr. Massingham asserts, is thoroughly conservative. Its model is the Socialist party of Germany, which Mr. Massingham persistently holds up as a pattern of the political virtues.

This is all thoroughly amiable and undisturbing, but one can not avoid the conclusion that it embodies a conception of socialism which could scarcely be recognized by poor old Karl Marx. The German Socialist party, as an organization, has demonstrated on several occasions during the past few years that it does not believe in socialism. The party became such a prosperous going concern under the old order that when it found itself faced with the possibility of having to realize a new order conceived in the spirit of its own political salesmanship, it retreated headlong. Confronted with the embarrassing portent of revolution, the leaders strove zealously to preserve themselves from the millennium. Pygmalion Scheidemann and his colleagues, astounded to find their statue of St. Karl stirring with life, were at pains to freeze him back into innocuous marble; and hence we have the Germany of Stinnes and Stresemann, with various socialist stalwarts horning in on the spoils of office by special arrangement with the capitalist brethren.

The British Labour party has also become a prosperous going concern under the old order; and apparently a corresponding change has come o'er the spirit of its dreams. Its leaders, those "practical politicians, breathing our native air of compromise and arrangement," are obviously willing to swap St. Karl for St. George any day, and they are more intent on capturing No. 10 Downing Street than capturing a socialist kingdom. At the recent conference of the Labour party, one zealous delegate suggested a resolution denouncing British imperialism, but Mr. Ramsay MacDonald promptly drenched him with cold water. "In principle" indeed, the Labour party may be devoted to socialism, but in

everyday politics it keeps as far removed from the socialist idea as organized Christianity is from the philosophy of Jesus. Its leaders profess that they would renovate the house, but they pledge themselves not to disturb a single stick of furniture. They speak of a new vintage of wine, but they take care to offer the old bottles. They would bring on a new order by changing the name while keeping the form.

In the western countries, St. Karl seems to have become a sort of Sunday deity. His followers in great numbers burn incense at his shrines, but they are unwilling to carry his doctrines into their week-day affairs. Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Massingham doubtless enjoy a sincere sentimental attachment for socialism, but they appear no more eager than Mr. Balfour or Mr. Baldwin to translate their doctrine into action. Mr. Massingham's series in the *Spectator* reveals this. Having proved that the Liberal party is played out because it has not the vitality to usher in a new day, he introduces the Labour party as true guide, and then proceeds to demonstrate that the Labour party is just the old Liberal party after all!

THE FADING STATE.

RECENTLY there have come to our attention two books which represent widely divergent tendencies in the social thought of our time; one of the authors is interested in government and party-politics, the other in economic life and voluntary co-operation; the one would avoid revolution, while the other aims at its accomplishment. The first of the volumes is a collection of essays by Professor Anson Daniel Morse, posthumously published under the title "Parties and Party Leaders" (Marshall Jones). The author identifies the State with the people, and proceeds then to inquire how the State, so defined, may keep the Government under control. He says that the oldest and crudest means to this end is revolution: "The obedience of government which the State used to secure at long intervals and for short periods, at great cost and very imperfectly by means of revolution and constituent assemblies, it now secures easily and far more durably and perfectly by means of party." It is in the United States that party best accomplishes the task of holding government in subjection to the popular will, for "to-day the American party-system presents a perfection of organization not elsewhere to be found."

Now if it were true that partisan political activity could bring government under popular control, then certainly such activity would be an acceptable alternative for an armed uprising which accomplishes the same end. All this we might admit, and still maintain that the control of government is neither worth voting for, nor worth fighting for, in any industrialized country. This, then, would be our answer to Professor Morse, that party-politics is a fair enough substitute for the kind of revolution that is not worth while; the fundamental revolution can best be accomplished on a different level altogether, and by different means.

This is substantially the position taken by Mr. James Peter Warbasse in his new volume on "Co-operative Democracy" (Macmillan). According to Mr. Warbasse, the co-operator proposes to alter the existing order of economic and political life, not by capturing government and employing its absolute power to new ends, but simply by organizing the people in voluntary associations to do things for themselves. In such associations, each formed to conduct a simple and specific operation that the members take part in and understand, democracy can actually function, as it can not possibly function in the complex State of to-day, much

less in the huge and intricate organization of the State-socialist's dream.

Where industry is concerned, the co-operator does not make "a detour through the maze of politics." "The State can leave business in private hands, and the people can go in on the ground floor and take the place of the private hands. . . . In the end, this ensures the highest aim of the highest-aiming socialists." The method of sudden revolt, the method of the tyrannicide, may be all very well where the object is to put a stop to some objectionable activity, but the co-operator does not want to put a stop to production; he wants to develop a new method of conducting the complicated operations of modern industry, and he has the good sense to see that this can not be accomplished all at once, on the morning after a cataclysmic revolution. The new system must develop slowly, as the co-operators learn by experiment and experience. This, says Mr. Warbasse, is the course that must be taken by any successful movement in the direction of economic democracy; and he believes, too, that even such non-economic functions as the administration of justice can be taken over in exactly the same way, by voluntary associations. He is in the full tide of the voluntarist tradition of Godwin, Proudhon and Kropotkin when he says: "The important matter is that the State shall be a fading State and that there shall be co-operative organization of the people to take its place."

If we were reviewing Mr. Warbasse's book, point by point, we should be obliged to take issue with him in several matters. For example, although he raises the question of land-monopoly, we do not believe that he sees the full significance of the abolition of monopoly, as a means of clearing the ground for co-operative action. Again we attach no sort of value to his attempted distinction between production for use or service, as it is conducted under the direction of consumers' co-operative societies, and production for profit, as conducted by societies of producers. There is no special virtue in the consumers' attempt to obtain goods at the lowest price, as against the producers' attempt to sell them at the highest price; the motive is exactly as self-interested in the one case as in the other, and the producers' society enjoys no such disfavour with us as it does with Mr. Warbasse. This, however, is beside our present point. The thing that we want to emphasize is that in this country and at this time, with the discussion of reform and revolution running constantly to politics and the great State, a book like this one on "Co-operative Democracy" is literally invaluable. It represents the general type of thought that these United States are most in need of, and we can only hope that it will draw discussion after it into a new and fertile field.

ART-MUSEUMS AND ART.

M. VIOLLET-LE-DUC once neatly expressed his aversion to seeing works of art in museums by saying that he preferred to see peaches hanging naturally on the tree rather than arranged in rows in the fruit shop. This observation came back to us the other day when we found ourselves, for the hundredth time, in a great museum of art, a little bleak and weary at the end of an hour's pilgrimage through the interminable galleries. As a technical school, we are willing to grant that museums may have an important place to fill; and as long as the meanest descendant of a Cézanne or a van Gogh can profit a little by his studies at the Louvre, one need not grudge those galleries all their dusting, their heating, their cost of repair and main-

tenance. In a museum of art, the painter knows what he wants and immediately gets it; but where do the rest of us come in? We walk, we linger, we admire, and we become weary; after a little time we experience a sense of profound discouragement, and we take refuge, perhaps, in the tea-room, to regain our serenity of soul in its calm and beautiful interior.

Beautiful interior indeed! It is precisely from the moment that one sits down in the tea-room that one discovers the humbug that our great museums of art, with all their loot, with all their amplitude of exhibition, ingenuously confess. The tea-room we are thinking of is not the gloomy, terra-cotta interior of the Victoria and Albert, nor the dingily neat basement in the Tate Gallery of London; criticism, like charity, should begin a little nearer home, and the museum that provoked these reflections is not a thousand miles from Forty-second Street. In the design of the building, the tea-room came as an obvious afterthought, and to make up for the carelessness of layout a sharp effort has recently been made to do the decoration up smartly: the woodwork is a soft pleasing green; the pillars have been covered and panelled and filled in with pictures that tell of mediæval courts and garb; effort that is made again and again when a little dens; in short, there has been an Effort, the sort of tea-shop is opened off Fifth Avenue, and a bright, vigilant young lady hovers over the scene, with a slight fragrance of new paint still clinging to her hands.

What, however, does the effort come to? Despite the fact that this museum makes a great show of encouraging the industrial arts, the chairs in its restaurant have no vitality of pattern that would distinguish them from a hundred others that the shops offer; nor does one gather from the decorations that this—only and precisely this—is what a great tea-room should look like; such a degree of tepid gaiety as the place achieves is often attained by many suburban housewives who do not call themselves interior decorators. No; all the examples of good decoration that the museum possesses are kept in the galleries; and one seems to hear the spirit of the museum saying apologetically to its visitors: "Follow my words, O brethren! not my example."

It would be bad enough if our museums of art merely failed as models; it is worse when their internal architecture is an example of how-not-to-do-it. Leaving the tea-room of this museum, we may perhaps saunter out with our cakes and coffee into the garden; and this will prove an even more dismal disappointment. The pavement is as bare as a city street; gaunt brick walls, like those of a factory or a loft, hem in the yard on every side; and as a protection from the sun which slants into this bleak enclosure, there is a corrugated iron roof supported on iron pillars—pillars that were highly esteemed during the 'eighties, when iron flowers, iron cornucopias, and iron cupids came forth from every industrial centre like some plutonian vomit. If one suddenly awakened into this "garden" out of a dream, one would probably believe that the place itself was a factory, and that the tea-room was a belated effort at welfare-work; indeed, the two or three statues that are stuck up against the walls would only heighten the impression, since they obviously have naught to do with the crude whiteness and angularity of this environment.

It would be unfair, perhaps, to call attention to these lapses and solecisms in a great museum, if they were accidental. The point is that they are quite typical; that one could match them with examples of vulgarity and commonplaceness in other great mu-

seums; and that the fault is so common that it seems to inhere in the very idea of an art-museum. Aristotle once said that a hand was not really a hand when it was cut off from the body where it functioned as a member. Are we altogether wrong when we carry this generalization over to a great part of the art that has been begged, borrowed, or stolen from the buildings of the old world? People who are interested in the dismembered art exhibited by the museum, for other reasons than sheer historic curiosity, are naturally a little slow to see in their own conduct the signs of a dismembered personality; and they can not realize how fantastic it is to worship Art piously in the galleries and forget its existence—or rather, its absence—in the tea-room and adjacent places.

We are inclined to believe, however, that this attitude is as much a vicious sentimentalism as the classic instance offered by William James of the lady who wept tenderly in the theatre over the sorrows of the poor and downtrodden whilst her coachman froze. An art-museum which genuinely sought to preserve art would not disdain, perhaps, to create it; rather it would see that there is ultimately no safe way of preserving the art of the past without fostering it perpetually anew. If the directors of our art-museums would fix their minds on the notion that their mission is to preserve art itself, and not merely to put on show such particular works as the vanity or generosity of patrons may put in their keeping, they could not, we think, continue to treat the parts of the building outside the galleries in such a loose perfunctory manner. As Whitman would say, if an art-museum can not convince by its presence, by what magic or power, can it convince?

MISCELLANY.

WHEN I wrote my suggestion last week that if the Opera-Comique comes over here next winter, it should give us a turn or two of the lighter French operatic composition, I had not read the excellent editorial plea in *Musical America* for 18 August, for better musical comedy in general. I wish I might reproduce it entire, for it is very sound and able. The editor frankly says that in the degeneration of operetta into musical comedy, "the best traditions of the lyric stage have been lost," and that in consequence of this, "the intelligent audience which once found relaxation and enjoyment in operetta has thrown up its hands in desperation and turned to other things." There seems to be no reason for doubting that this audience still exists and that it would come to the front in short order if it had the chance. The Society of American Singers went some way towards proving this, I should say, with their revival of Gilbert and Sullivan at the Park Theatre, three years ago.

In the same issue, *Musical America* gave some box-office reports of what had been done in St. Louis in the summer season just ended. I was greatly interested to see that, for instance, a week's performances of the "Fledermaus" drew 30,272 people; a week of the "Merry Widow" drew 43,867; one of the "Zigeunerbaron," 29,558; and one of the "Prince of Pilsen" drew 41,424. The question must arise, What advantage has St. Louis over New York that such a thing should be successfully attempted there and can not be attempted here? There are more competing attractions in New York, no doubt, but then there are also a great many more people. Rents and production-costs are higher, but so are box-office prices. I believe that an experiment with the better examples of lighter lyric comedy would be as successful in New York as the Bouffes Parisiens was in the middle of the last

century; and the management might well begin by reviving some of the pieces that grew from seed sown in the Bouffes—such as the "Fille de Mme. Angot," "Giroflé-Girofla," "Orphée" and the "Little Duke."

AN increasing number of cheaply-printed organs of life and opinion, which never come to club-tables, give evidence that cerebration, often both of a penetrative and censorious nature, is active, and that sooner or later it must receive due attention. A good specimen of these is the Illinois *Miner*, the two-fisted publication that represents 100,000 mine-workers of the Prairie State. I infer that some of the readers of the *Miner* have been critical of what they regard as that paper's pessimism about the established order; and recently, in an editorial entitled "Why We Tear Our Shirt," the editor was moved to make clear his state of mind for the benefit of doubting subscribers.

WHILE this editor disclaims holding "a sour-faced, snoot-making attitude towards life," he finds conditions scarcely what they should be for the producers that his paper purports to represent, and he insists upon the right of his readers to a realistic presentation of the facts of existence. "Most newspapers," he says, "are making a comfortable living by telling fairy stories to their readers once a day." This easier way of getting on in the world, is, as he views it, not for the *Miner*, and it is refreshing to find an editor thus vindicating the dignity and the intellectual honesty which should attach to the profession. "We have come upon no Federal law," continues the philosopher of the *Miner*, "that compels us to think that everything is lovely, and that this is the best of all possible worlds if we only take it lying down and stop kicking about things." He admits, however, that the Pollyanna spirit of the Rotary Clubs and the Puritan temper of Congress may yet fit us out with such a statute—possibly, I suppose, prohibiting editorials containing more than one-tenth of one per cent of pessimism about our sacred institutions.

IN a broader view, the editor of the *Miner* intimates that under our peculiar system, certain groups have a sort of vested interest in optimism. "If you and I, brother," he remarks to his readers, "had put in a good day's work at the bank hi-jacking farmers into accepting loans at usury rates, and damning labour at the luncheon table over fifty-cent cigars, and then we had gone home and busted the Volstead law all over the butler's pantry, and climbed into a night-gown and ganged on some helpless devil in the name of law and order, why shouldn't we think this was a pretty good old world? We would be mad, too, if some mean-minded labour editor came along and tried to throw cold water on the party." I commend this not inurbane though boisterous paragraph to respectable occupants of swivel-chairs who are not wont to concern themselves about how the other half thinks.

THE Italian-Greek imbroglio exhibits a characteristic weakness in American knowledge of international affairs. As Mr. William MacDonald was saying to me the other day, the American may know about what is going on with some of the major Powers—say, with England, France and Germany—but in forming his opinions he leaves out other factors which are very important but of which he knows nothing. It is in this respect that he falls below the European in making his forecasts. Thus, for instance, when he tells the European that the effect on Germany of this-or-that arrangement between England and France will probably be thus-and-so, the European will say, "Ah, but are you aware of the latest developments in Czecho-

Slovakia?" or, "Do you know the facts of the military situation in Poland?"—countries which the American would be doing pretty well even to locate on the map.

THE Continental European is brought up on this sort of knowledge; one might almost say he is born with it. The absence of it here accounts for the weakness in schemes like that of the Foreign Policy Association or the Williams College Institute of Politics. In so far as these have degenerated into mere propaganda-mills—which is pretty far—their activities are, of course, wholly devoid of educational value. But even in so far as they have not, they are almost wholly devoid of value to any one who has not put in a couple of years of pretty close study of the political and diplomatic history of modern Europe. Judging by what comes out of them, which method I presume has warrant of Scripture, they are good examples of our institutionalized style of undertaking to get a working knowledge of something without paying much attention to the indispensable preliminaries.

JOURNEYMAN.

POETRY.

THE BIRTH TOKENS.

(*Variation on a theme from Menander.*)

This is the place, and we will leave him here
In the deep valley; when the sun is high
Some warmth may reach him;
That were good;
Still better should
Some kindly shepherd find him;
Who can say?
Even a wolf may yield him food.
Nature is rich in resource and in care;
He will not die;
So place the tokens with him there
And come away. . . .

Now have we laid upon his lips a song
Whose melody for him is all;
Whose words but names he shall not comprehend
Of objects in a dream,
Poor symbols without end
That drift and fall
And sweep like leaves along
The music of a stream.

And we have bound a book upon his brow
Whose signs he shall not understand,
Though heaven and earth have set their hand
Unto it and their wisdom given;
But neither earth nor heaven
Shall witness to another theme
That he shall trace below
The image and the pattern, nor declare
How all its lines are fair. . . .

. Sound
Are still his slumbers; look again;
How like a blossom on the ground
He lies!
Yet though the earth shall strain
His being to her breast
And pour her life through every vein
And lift her beauty to his eyes,
He shall not be her own:
Some day the tokens will be found;
His history known, his lineage guessed.

ANNE GOODWIN WINSLOW.

A NEW NATIONALIST POLICY.

THE former Russian Empire represented an enormous conglomeration of nationalities. In the region of the Caucasus alone it is estimated that thirty distinct tribes live together in a state of inextricable ethnographic confusion. The rising tide of Tartar conquest and the gradual ebbing of this tide as the Muscovite Tsars drove out or subdued the alien invaders left the eastern provinces of European Russia strewed with fragmentary colonies of Asiatic peoples, who retained their language, their religion and their racial habits in the midst of the Slavic population around them. The Russian Empire, in its course of expansion, absorbed a number of distinct national groups, Poles, Finns, Letts, Esthonians, Armenians, to say nothing of the more primitive native tribal units of Siberia and Russian Central Asia.

Under these circumstances it was quite natural that strong nationalist centrifugal tendencies should have manifested themselves as soon as the imperial administrative apparatus was broken up by the March revolution. These tendencies were greatly strengthened by the Tsarist policy of brutal and stupid repression, which had been applied to a greater or less degree against all the non-Russian nationalities. The downfall of the Kerensky provisional Government is usually ascribed, with considerable justice, to its failure to heed the overwhelming popular demand for land and peace. Its inability or unwillingness to recognize the aspirations of the subject nationalities was another important contributing factor in its collapse.

Russia emerged from the period of revolution and civil war deprived of its Western tier of provinces, which were erected into the independent Republics of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Esthonia and Finland. To this extent the country's national problem was simplified; but a very complicated racial situation still remained. Under the Soviet rule there were about seventy-five million Russians and sixty-five million members of non-Russian nationalities. The Russians are largely massed in a dozen provinces centring about Moscow. Beyond this national nucleus the Russian population extends itself in thin streams, generally following the railway-lines and the rivers. Economic as well as racial and linguistic differences separate the Russians from the other nationalities. As a result of the Tsarist policy of keeping the Oriental provinces mere colonies for the production of raw materials and forbidding the establishment of factories in these regions, almost all the large industrial centres, Moscow and Petrograd, Tula and Briansk, Tver and Ivanovo-Vosnessensk, are to be found within the frontiers of Russia proper, and almost all the railway and industrial workers are Russians. The non-Russian peoples are almost all herdsmen and farmers.

Now the conventional solution for such a national problem as exists in Russia, the solution practised with equal zeal by the former European empires and by the imperialistic republics which have succeeded them, is for the dominant race to oppress and exploit, irritate and insult the lesser nationalities by every means within its power. The present tendency throughout Europe, a tendency unpleasantly suggestive of the American Legion and the Ku-Klux-Klan, is to exalt the national State into a kind of deity and to persecute unbelievers with the most merciless rigor. Typical of the species of nationalist insanity now prevalent in Europe is the decision of the Polish Government to tear down a magnificent cathedral simply because it was built during the period of Russian rule.

But the Russian Soviet leaders, perhaps because

they were free from the economic preoccupations of monopoly and privilege which are usually closely intertwined with chauvinist ideology, displayed the imagination to conceive and the courage to carry out an absolutely novel method of dealing with their racial relations. They dropped altogether the idea of Russian hegemony. They abandoned the attempt to force widely different racial groups into one common mould. Instead of suppressing they encouraged the efforts of every distinct racial group, however small, to manage its own affairs, to use its own language, to develop its own culture. They envisaged the enormous Soviet State, embracing one-sixth of the surface of the earth, not as a strictly disciplined, unified organization, governed in centralized fashion from Moscow, but as a federation of self-governing nationalities.

The first step in putting the Russian State organism on a federal basis was the creation of a large number of autonomous political units within the frontiers of the former Russian Empire. At the present time there are between twenty-five and thirty of these units, varying in size from the Ukrainian Republic, with its thirty-five million inhabitants, to little obscure Tartar tribes, such as make up the population of the Tchuvas, Votyak, Marinsk and Ziriansk provinces. Each one, regardless of size and degree of cultural development, is given the right to run its own show.

The policy of the Soviet Government regarding minor nationalities is directed primarily towards the wiping out of the old bitter memories of Tsarist oppression. The Commissar for Nationalities, M. Stalin, who is, incidentally, a very powerful figure in the inner councils of the Communist party, is himself a member of one of the small Caucasian tribes. In framing the policies of his Commissariat he has shown himself scrupulously sensitive to the feelings of the non-Russian nationalities. The Tsarist Government refused to admit that there was such a thing as a Ukrainian language. Now the principle is accepted and carried into practice that courts and schools shall be carried on in the language of the majority of the population. This is by no means restricted to Ukraina. The papers report that the use of the native language in public business has been enjoined in Azerbaijan. This concession is all the more striking because the people of Azerbaijan are akin to the Turks in nationality, and the country itself lies directly on the Turkish frontier. It might be expected that the Government would be afraid of separatist tendencies. I once raised this general question with an official in the Commissariat for Nationalities.

"We are not afraid of separatism," he replied. "We are convinced that our system of free union and full cultural autonomy for all peoples who live within the frontiers of the Federation is the best guaranty against separatism. But, if any of the Republics included in our union should wish to leave it, we would be perfectly ready to concede them the right to secede."

Formerly, the official title of the Russian Government was R. S. F. S. R., Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic. This seemed to smack too much of Russian hegemony; and last winter, by decision of the All-Russian Soviet Congress, it was changed to S. S. S. R., the Russian initials for Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. The Executive Committee of the Soviet Congress, which is now in session, will have for its main task the working out of the details of a federal constitution for this union. Among other things a House of Nationalities is to be established, with equal representation from all the autonomous Republics of the Federation. This House will exist side by side

with the Soviet Congress as a sort of second chamber, and will occupy itself especially with the problems that are peculiar to the various nationalities.

In the economic field very solid concessions have been made to the non-Russian nationalities. The Tsarist policy was to plant Russian colonists in the best lands of the steppe country that lies north and east and west of the Caspian Sea. The nomadic native tribes were driven into the arid stretches or pressed back into the mountains. Much the same policy was followed in Turkestan, where huge estates were carved out for the benefit of Russian adventurers and court favourites. All this was changed under the Soviet land-policy. The natives got back a large part of their fertile land.

There is still another point in which the economic imperialism of the preceding regime has been discarded. Formerly Turkestan and Bokhara and the Caucasus were treated much as England treated India before the war. They were regarded simply as reservoirs of cheap raw material; and any industrial development was strictly forbidden. This, taken in connexion with the land-grabbing of the Russian colonists, led to the most unfortunate results, especially in Ferghana, one of the provinces of Russian Central Asia. Here many of the people were pushed off the land without even being given a chance to go into factories. The consequence was that many natives took to banditry as the only means left them of making a living. The Soviet Government has swept away these artificial restrictions. The industrial life of Russia itself is in shattered condition; but factories with equipment have been set up in Turkestan, Bokhara and Daghestan. The central Government will no longer make economic discriminations between one part of the Federation and another.

The Asiatic peoples of Russia are culturally backward, partly through long centuries of inertia and isolation, partly as a result of imperialistic oppression. In Turkestan, for example, the percentage of illiteracy is estimated at ninety-seven per cent. Every effort is being made to change this situation. Besides opening a large number of schools, clubs and other cultural institutions throughout the Mohammedan East the Russian Government has established in Moscow a very interesting institution called the Communist University of the Toiling East. Here are gathered students from all the Oriental tribes of Russia; Tartars from the Volga and the Crimea; Kirghiz and Bashkirs from the steppes that lie along the frontier between European and Asiatic Russia; Sarts and Uzbeks from Bokhara; mountaineers from the Caucasus who have never seen a city or a railway. These students are given a scientific and cultural education and sent back to their communities where they become natural leaders in the work of enlightenment that is now going on in the Russian East. The Communist University of the Toiling East and the other institutions for training Oriental students may be considered Soviet Russia's substitute for the British Indian Civil Service. Instead of training young Russians to go out and rule over the backward natives, the Soviet Government prefers to avoid an enormous amount of racial friction by giving the Eastern peoples the training which they need in order to be able to govern themselves effectively. In the provincial Russian universities a proportional number of places is reserved for students belonging to the racial minorities.

As a piece of practical politics the Russian policy towards the minor nationalities is an unqualified success. The Oriental races, little versed in Marxian

economics, instinctively recognized the difference between the fundamental imperialism of the Kerensky-Miliukov regime, thinly disguised with democratic trappings, and the sincere internationalism of the Bolsheviks. As a result they ranged themselves solidly on the side of the revolution. They played a great, inadequately recognized part in deciding the issue of the civil war. Some of the best regiments in the Red army were made up of Bashkirs and Volga Tartars. Turkestan remained loyal to the Soviet regime, even when it was entirely cut off from Russia by the armies of Kolchak. The fierce mountaineers of Daghestan harried and disorganized Denikin's rear, and occupied the attention of large bodies of his troops at the time when all his forces were needed for the drive on Moscow. As a result of its tolerant and generous policy towards minor nationalities the newly formed Federation of Socialist Republics is really a much more firmly knit political organism than the repressive empire which it replaced. The ground has been cut from under the feet of nationalist separatist agitation by the simple process of eliminating the pin-pricks on which such agitation thrives.

It is not likely that the influence of Russia's new policy towards minor nationalities will be limited to the States included in the Federation. Russia is a great Asiatic power. She has relations, geographical, commercial, racial, with all the large Oriental countries. The region of the Caucasus forms a natural bridge between Russia and Turkey and Persia. Through Bokhara and Turkestan the Russian Federation is in touch with Afghanistan, and, to a lesser degree, with India. Russia and China have a common frontier thousands of miles long. There are no clear-cut lines of racial division between Russia and her Asiatic neighbour States. Reports of new developments in the policy of the Russian Government towards the Oriental nationalities spread rapidly through the medium of the mixed tribes which live along the Russian Asiatic frontiers. The Russian leaders are quite inclined to recognize, even to emphasize, the rôle that their country is playing in Asia.

"We regard ourselves as a bridge between Europe and Asia, and as the vanguard of the Eastern peoples which are struggling for freedom from Western imperialism. We feel that our own successful struggle against enslavement by foreign capital is the best encouragement to them to persist in their struggle." This was how M. Karakhan, Assistant Commissar for Foreign Affairs, himself an Armenian, summed up his conception of Russia's relation to Asia. The same view is held by many other prominent members of the Russian Government, as can be seen from a large number of speeches and articles.

The Soviet statesmen, however, are far too clever and realistic to dream of furthering the cause of Asiatic freedom by means of the clumsy intrigues that are periodically reported to Lord Curzon by his spies and credulously set forth by that diplomat in solemn notes. They know that the British rule in India can not be broken down by smuggling a few agitators or a few rifles and cartridges into that country. They rely, in unconventional but imaginative fashion, upon the liberating power of ideas. They count, first of all, upon the foreign repercussions of their policy of permitting every Oriental nationality within their own frontiers the widest possible scope for autonomous development, and of eliminating all traces of chauvinism and economic imperialism from their attitude toward the non-Russian peoples. They also count upon the effect produced by their treaties with Persia, Afghan-

istan, Turkey and China; treaties in which these more or less independent Asiatic nations are dealt with, for the first time in the history of their modern relations with Western powers, on a basis of full equality.

Mr. Lloyd George was wrong when he recently declared in the House of Commons that England must reckon with the reappearance of the old Russia in the Middle East. It is something far more subtle and dangerous that is threatening the stability of the British Empire. The old imperialistic struggle between England and Russia was a contest of bribes and guns, in which England could hold its own without special difficulty. But the new Russian Eastern policy, whose internal manifestation is the creation of the federation of self-governing nationalities and whose external manifestation is the conclusion of the non-imperialistic treaties with Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan and China, can be effectively countered, in the long run, only by imitation. And the introduction of a genuinely autonomous regime in India would, of course, disrupt the bases of economic imperialism upon which the British Empire rests.

WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN.

TWO ASPECTS OF CONRAD.

To Joseph Conrad character is the supreme element of life: it is character that distinguishes and sustains his heroes; it is character that brings them into conflict with fate; and it is character that, when their lives close in disaster, sacrifices them to the tragic destiny that broods over all his greatest work.

Of courage, which he thinks man's highest virtue, Conrad takes the realist's view, seeing its birth not in the hot recklessness of youth but in a sturdy and hardened acceptance of necessity. Even then, "there is somewhere a point where you let go everything. And you have got to live with that truth—do you see? Given a certain combination of circumstances, fear is sure to come. Abominable funk. And even for those who do not believe this truth there is fear all the same—the fear of themselves." If to wary and experienced manhood the way is thus beset with perils, how much more is it so with youth, whose mind is full of dreams of valorous deeds? Conrad, who has sung with passionate ardour of the romance and the thrill and the ecstasy of youth, does not refrain from pointing relentlessly to the weak spot that time and circumstance may reveal. Indeed, the philosophical theme most attractive to him—a theme which may be said to haunt his work, welling up in unexpected places as though from the depths of his consciousness—is that of the momentary failure in a crucial situation of one ordinarily held to be adequate in manly virtue. It is in a mood of sulky passion when his exalted egoism is wounded that Nostromo, the magnificent Capataz de Cargadores, allows himself to be lured by the gleam of silver and the dream of wealth from the one thing in life he really cherishes—the splendid image of himself glimpsed in the dazzled admiration of the mob—and becomes the fear-haunted guardian of a boatload of ingots. In "Lord Jim," it is the physical self, the mere limbs, that play false at the critical moment, forcing Jim, in defiance of the resolution and courage of his conscious mind, to jump clear of the sinking ship. In "Under Western Eyes," Razumov, that other Hamlet, whom circumstances will not leave to his studies and his dreams, is driven by the instinct of self-preservation into a base betrayal totally unworthy of the real nobility of his nature. "There are evil moments in every life. A false sug-

gestion enters one's brain, and then fear is born—fear of oneself, fear for oneself."

Over these men Death and Death-in-Life have diced once more, and Death-in-Life has won. Henceforth, with the curse of the Ancient Mariner upon them, life can only be a long, vain struggle to cast off or evade or expiate the guilt of a moment. Potential heroes, they become the puppets of their past, writhing before the ever-present vision of that "obscure and awful attribute in themselves," whereby they failed to take the chance life offered. The nobility within themselves, becoming their worst enemy, lets loose within them strange torments of intolerable self-mistrust, until they are the lifelong slaves of a fixed idea. What is the end of it? There is no end but death, to close the long, remorseful voyage that is their lot. But though in them life has found a flaw, and fate has caught them unprepared, yet in death, rising once more to heroic heights, they grasp with firm hands the thread of destiny. Resolute and courageous they embrace the annihilation that is to justify with its final sacrifice their existence and thus requite for ever the follies and mistakes of life. From the lips of Marlow, who lights up with cynical or sympathetic comment the dark places of many histories, come these last words on Jim—as they might be on Razumov, or on the reserved, fastidious Heyst, eternally held back from life by his infernal mistrust of it.

And that's the end. He passes away under a cloud, inscrutable at heart, forgotten, unforgiven, and excessively romantic. Not in the wildest days of his boyish visions could he have foreseen the alluring shape of such an extraordinary success! For it may very well be that in the short moment of his last proud and unflinching glance, he had beheld the face of that opportunity which, like an Eastern bride, had come veiled to his side.

Thus finishes the long struggle wherein the glamour and the fire of youth have been quenched by time. But here, as in the greatest tragedies, out of defeat comes victory, out of annihilation, life. In these men is revealed to us the true type of the Conrad hero, in life inadequate, in death "an obscure conqueror of fame."

Mingled with this tragic view of the universe, there is in Conrad a quality which recalls his own and his reader's mind alike from the deep places of despair. Turning from the dark answers given by fate to his philosophical questionings and giving himself up with rapture to the visual beauty of the world, he embraces the joyful task of the lyrical poet and bears his "true testimony to the visible wonder, the haunting terror, the infinite passion and the illimitable serenity; to the supreme law and the abiding mystery of the sublime spectacle."

In his search after psychological truth Conrad is always much concerned with the creation of "atmosphere"; and it is, especially in his earlier work, in the development of a suitable physical and mental setting that he has used his marvellous gifts of poetical description. It follows necessarily that his descriptive passages are never in the nature of asides or extras, but are always indissolubly united with the theme and emotion of the human drama. With infinite subtlety he can charge the atmosphere with prophetic import till it is electric with things still veiled in the mystery of the future. Thus in a blaze of sinister splendour by day, in a dream of serenity by night, he shows the fateful "Patna" pursuing her way to Mecca with her pilgrim hordes.

Every morning the sun, as if keeping pace in his revolutions with the progress of the pilgrimage, emerged with a

silent burst of light exactly at the same distance astern of the ship, caught up with her at noon, pouring the concentrated fire of his rays on the pious purpose of the men, glided past on his descent, and sank mysteriously into the sea evening after evening, preserving the same distance ahead of her advancing bows. The five whites on board lived amidships, isolated from the human cargo. The awnings covered the deck with a white roof from stem to stern, and a faint hum, a low murmur of sad voices, alone revealed the presence of a crowd of people upon the great blaze of the ocean. Such were the days, still, hot, heavy, disappearing one by one into the past, as if falling into an abyss for ever open in the wake of the ship which, lonely under a wisp of smoke, held on her steadfast way black and smouldering in a luminous immensity, as it scorched by a flame flicked at her from a heaven without pity.

The nights descended on her like a benediction.

Here the compulsion to visualize, strong as it is, is held prisoner within a magic spell that hangs, like a presage of evil, about the ship; what is created is not so much a scene, as a definite illusion—fit prelude for the tragedy to come. This quality of subtle suggestion is of the very essence of Conrad's early art, in stories, for instance, like "Youth." There, to heighten and enhance the romance and the magic of youth, he adds the glamour and the mystery of the East, and gives to the whole the quality of a poignant dream.

It is, however, when Conrad sets out to show man's greatness in the face of nature's majesty, as he does in dramatic lyrics like "Typhoon," that his imagination takes its highest and most sustained flights. The beat of primeval forces is in them, the wild loveliness of fury let loose upon the universe, the defiant trumpeting of the tempest, the fiery gleam of the last star vanishing before the hurricane that dashes the very birds of the air to the ground—the full panoply of nature's might is there; and pitted against it all, infinite against infinite, the indomitable spirit of man.

Conrad who, for all his love of the sea, views it with the eyes of a realist—"the true sea that plays with men till their hearts are broken, and wears stout ships to death"—retains for the ships that sail it all the burning ardour of his romantic soul. The love of ships, he says in "The Mirror of the Sea," is the best and genuine part of the love of the sea. Even the heaviest, clumsiest vessel is capable of inspiring affection. At worst, "You can always put up with 'em"; at best, they are lovely, living things, worthy to be the passion of a man's life. Once at least Conrad has given us a ship of almost magic beauty, a ship that "sailed like a witch, steered like a little boat, and, like some fair women of adventurous life famous in history, seemed to have the secret of perpetual youth."

The brig's business was on uncivilized coasts, with obscure rajahs dwelling in nearly unknown bays; with native settlements up mysterious rivers opening their sombre, forest-lined estuaries among a welter of pale green reefs and dazzling sand-banks, in lonely straits of calm blue water all aglitter with sunshine. Alone, far from the beaten tracks, she glided, all white, round dark, frowning headlands, stole out, silent like a ghost, from behind points of land stretching out all black in the moonlight; or lay hove to, like a sleeping seabird, under the shadow of some nameless mountain waiting for a signal. She would be glimpsed suddenly on misty, squally days dashing disdainfully aside the short aggressive waves of the Java Sea; or be seen far, far away, a tiny dazzling white speck flying across the brooding purple masses of thunderclouds piled up on the horizon.

Thus does Conrad describe the mission of the ship that he has created, above all others, vibrant with life, unique in the rare perfection of her beauty. To some extent at least the words might also stand as a description of

Conrad's own part in life; for has he not, on the fleet, throbbing vessel of his art, borne us through storm and fury to the ends of the earth, and through pity and terror to the very hearts of men?

The question in which of the two rôles, that of the psychologist or that of the poet, Conrad has done his most enduring work might form the starting-point of an interesting discussion. To judge by the marked influence Conrad has exercised on the younger English novelists it might be concluded that his power is greater on the psychological side. This faculty is, no doubt, enhanced by the extremely complicated method Conrad has evolved wherein, to gain detail and convincingness of characterization, he has resorted to an elaborate network of disquieting hints and involved speculation lit up by flashes of intuition; a network in which second-hand narration is employed to reveal people from unexpected angles and to throw strange light on the dark places of their past. Throughout their history he dodges backwards and forwards in a fashion that seems at first purposeless and chaotic, but in which he is in reality never deflected from the task he has assumed of creating round his personages the illusions of time and space. Such a method, when not exaggerated, can be used, as it is in "Nostromo," to combine great complexity with extremely vivid effects and clearly defined outlines; on the other hand, since its development demands at certain points a disproportionate length of treatment, it is apt to retard speed at the very place where speed should be accelerated, thus giving an effect of ponderousness to the whole and laying it open to serious criticism on artistic grounds. In his more lyrical works, where this method is in abeyance, there is no doubt that Conrad, from the æsthetic point of view, attains a purer and more finished, if less complex, art. Here, however, he does not so much break fresh ground and reveal new possibilities for the novelist's art, as add further gems to the already vast treasure-house of English poetical prose. Thus, although it would seem that at present his psychological gift is considered responsible for Conrad's more interesting, if not indeed his more valuable, contribution to English letters, yet it is by no means impossible or even unlikely that, when time has given more balance and perspective to the criticism of his works, this judgment may be modified or indeed reversed, and Conrad be accepted in the eyes of posterity primarily as one of the greatest English prose poets.

DOROTHY MARTIN.

AN UP-STATE ANTHOLOGY.

I.

THE odds and ends of experience that I am about to put on record here are no invention of my own. They have come to my knowledge quite by accident, through a special revelation—the kind of revelation that will come to any man who has dealt for a long time with abstractions, and is then brought suddenly into contact with the life of some remote village. The complexity of this life will not baffle him, as the life of the city so often does; it will arouse his interest and his sympathy—and especially so when the current loses itself in deep and devious channels, only to emerge again in some conspicuous tragedy. At any rate, this was the effect produced upon me by the sombre story of Dr. Aurelius Stoneman and Miss Mary Latham—a story that may now be followed to a climax that lies on the farther side of the village churchyard.

Miss Latham was known in her day as the chief gossip of the village, though it is hard to say how she managed

to find time and energy for the accumulation and re-sale of news. She lived alone in an old house that weathered to the colour of granite, as she herself turned grey, and was buried each year more deeply in foliage that grew and flourished as the old lady's strength declined. For lack of a competent hand to keep them in order, the Norway spruces smothered the lawn-grass with their annual deposit of needles, and put out branches that kept the house in shadow even in winter, when the wind had cleared away the leaves of the other trees.

It was in such an advanced stage of decay that I found Miss Latham's house and premises, when I first visited the village; but even then the vegetable-garden and the poultry-runs still showed the evidence of continuous, if somewhat enfeebled care. This out-of-door activity, together with a little work in the way of sewing and cloth-dyeing for her neighbours, was Miss Latham's only source of livelihood; and inasmuch as the stream did not flow very freely, or bring a yield of any great abundance, the old lady was unable to meet the interest on the mortgage that lay against her homestead (I ask my readers to believe that this mortgage is a matter of public record, and not an item that I have borrowed from some novel of fifty years ago). The interest, I say, could not be scraped together, and Miss Latham was obliged eventually to sell her house to a neighbour, who agreed to let her occupy the premises for the balance of her days. With the consummation of the sale, the old lady was in funds, for the first time in many a year; and it now becomes our task to trace the disposition of this treasure.

It is in this connexion that we shall have to introduce an old friend of Miss Latham's, and a frequent caller at her house—Dr. Aurelius Stoneman. The doctor was, and still is, a personage of great importance in the neighbourhood. His persistent employment of a horse and buggy, in this day of automobiles; his statuesque presence; his old-fashioned manner of dress; his ruddy complexion and snow-white burnsides, are calculated to produce an impression of solid worth, which is not necessarily interfered with by the silken quality of his voice and the extraordinary sweetness of his smile. At any rate, Miss Latham took him at his word when he promised to attend her minor illnesses without charge, for old friendship's sake; and certainly she hardly knew what to make of it when the doctor responded to the news of the sale of her home by putting in a bill for services rendered, for almost the whole amount of the purchase-price. The request for payment was followed presently by a threat to bring suit, and in a sort of panic the old lady paid over something like six hundred dollars, with the understanding that the promise of free attendance should be renewed. Thereafter, Dr. Stoneman hitched his horse more frequently than ever at Miss Latham's front gate.

Miss Latham was a trusting soul where her neighbours were concerned, but she had small faith in new-fangled institutions. She reported the doctor's promise to her friends, with every evidence of credulity, but she was afraid to deposit the remainder of her hoard in the village bank, and insisted rather that the purchaser of the homestead should continue to hold the money for her, as he had done from the beginning. She was obliged to draw on this account occasionally, but she did so only with extreme reluctance, for it was her one worldly ambition that the money she left behind might suffice to raise a modest stone for her in the graveyard upon which she could look out from her south window.

Finally the day came when Dr. Stoneman's visits ceased. The minister gathered the people together for the funeral; and then, when a decent interval had elapsed, the doctor got himself appointed administrator of the estate, and in this capacity he presently assembled the people again for

that final episode of death and disintegration—an auction of personal belongings, a deliberate and final destruction of personality. The ghoulish business went off tolerably well, and it was said in the village that the proceeds of the sale, together with the remainder of the homestead-fund, would certainly purchase a gravestone that Miss Latham would be proud of, if she could only see it.

For two years, the villagers looked forward to the appearance of an appropriate monument, or speculated idly upon its failure to appear; and then finally one of them wrote to Dr. Stoneman for information about how matters stood. The inquirer wanted to “get it in writing,” and this is what he got (I myself have seen the letter):

My dear Mr. S—:

The following is a copy of the official account rendered and accepted in the case of the estate of the late Mary Latham:

Credit:			
Cash balance	\$410.00		
From sale of effects.....	79.00		
		489.00	\$489.00
Debit:			
Funeral	\$ 55.00		
Medical services	462.00		
		\$517.00	\$517.00
Debit balance		\$ 28.00	

Trusting that this information will prove satisfactory, I am,

Yours very truly,
Aurelius Stoneman, M.D.

II.

In the last will and testament of Miss Mary Latham, as I have found it recorded in the memory of her neighbours, there were just two items of importance. The first of these had to do with the erection of a monument in the nearby cemetery; and in the first of these sketches of village-life, I have already explained how it happens that the wishes of the deceased in this matter have remained for two years unfulfilled. The other item was of a negative character; and in order that it may be properly understood, I must explain that the inhabitants of the village are not all of the old Yankee stock to which Miss Latham belonged. There are also several families of Celts, who have settled here to take service on a neighbouring estate, and it was to these newcomers that Miss Latham referred, when she told her friends that she would turn over in her grave if any of those Catholic Irish ever moved his truck into her house.

It was two years ago that Miss Latham had her last opportunity to express her desires in the matter of the home that she was leaving, and the narrower quarters to which she must go; and now, although her grave remains unmarked, her house is not without a tenant. A year ago it became evident that the house was haunted, though certainly not by the spirit of its departed mistress. Several times in late autumn, when the air had already been sharpened to a fine edge by the frost, I passed along the village-street at night, and as I came opposite Miss Latham's windows, I saw a light inside, and heard the sound of a hammer or a saw in most industrious employment. When I learned that the homestead had come into the hands of James Duncan, the Irish foreman who worked all day on his employer's estate, and then undertook a second day's work each evening on his own account, it seemed to me that there was an epochal quality in the nightly contest between the ghost of the old stock and

the spirit of the new, for possession of these ancient premises.

When I returned to the village this spring, it was already obvious that Miss Latham had lost the fight. The old house was completely transformed: the long sagging veranda had been replaced by a stocky and diminutive porch; the fences and the shrubbery had been cut away, and the spruces had been trimmed back so that the full sunshine fell on walls now painted a fresh yellow, with workmanlike trimming in white. The place seemed to have lost half its size and all its mystery; indeed it had the look of a small child, freshly scrubbed for Sunday School; and I must admit that I resented the change.

However, when the neighbours told me that Miss Latham's successor had celebrated his conquest by setting up a crucifix in every room of the house, I took heart of grace. Such a man will not be altogether satisfied (so I thought) with new boards and fresh paint; and presently I discovered that I was right. One Sunday afternoon, a few weeks ago, I was drawn out-of-doors by the music of an accordion, and there in the meadow behind James Duncan's house, the Irish community was gathered together. The accordion was expertly played; the lilt of the Irish airs was almost enough to set my own feet going, and the people out in the meadow were not held in check by any of the conventions or ineptitudes that I had to contend with. They danced in pairs and groups and circles; they clapped their hands and sang, sometimes, when they felt like it—all on the holy Sabbath day, and all within earshot of Mary Latham's grave.

G. T. R.

THE WIVES OF KING SOLOMON.
II. AVIA'S FIRST SAYING.

AVIA, the first wife of Solomon, was of less than medium stature, and exceedingly delicately moulded. Her hair was golden, and her eyes blue, and her skin was white as the snows on Lebanon; and upon her cheeks there played a roseate shimmer like the rays of the sinking sun gleaming upon the snows of the mountain peak.

But his second wife, Numa, the daughter of the King of Geshur, was tall and stalwart. Her shoulders were broad, and her breasts rose like the turrets of a citadel. Blue-black hair had she, and brown eyes that shot forth flashes of flame like a fiery volcano. And like the russet fires of the mountain in deepening darkness, so a deep steady red glowed in her dusky cheeks.

When Avia first beheld her, she was terrified. She felt as if she were standing, small and insignificant, before a high flaming tower. She could not open her mouth to speak, for she had not imagined her so. Moreover, her heart was filled with pain at the indignity which Solomon had inflicted upon her by taking to himself a second wife. And she felt that she would burst into tears at the first word that she should utter.

Solomon stood beside her, and his gaze lashed her as with whips; and when she remained silent, he said to her, “Avia, you remember what I have told you. You must explain to your companion, Numa, the nature of man which you know only too well, for Numa desires to hear it from you since she will never fathom it herself,” and he burst into laughter. And Numa, too, burst into laughter, but her laughter was like the whinny of a fiery mare. Avia stealthily glanced at Solomon, but when she saw the eyes which he fastened upon the whinnying Numa, she was overcome with loathing and shuddered.

But soon Solomon ceased to laugh and sternly said, “How much longer will you keep us waiting, Avia?” Avia collected herself and barely murmured, “Not to her can I disclose what I have pondered in the depths of my

heart regarding the nature of man. But when I saw her with you, other words came to me, which she will, perhaps, understand." Again she became silent, and Solomon urged her, "Tell us what words you have found now."

"And you will not feel affronted?" Avia asked.

"You may speak what is in your mind." And when she still kept silence, he muttered, "Well?"

A faint smile of disdain spread over her lips as she said, "The wisest and noblest among men becomes transformed into a hot Arabian stallion when he sees before him such a hot mare."

Solomon again laughed heartily; and Numa also laughed, scarcely understanding what Avia had said. Then Solomon asked, "And what were you prepared to say before you had seen her with me?"

But Avia replied with her ironical smile, "Shall I disclose all that I know to one wife? What would remain to me for those to come?" And Solomon laughingly made answer, "Surely I shall not keep you waiting long with what you have to say."

DAVID PINSKI.

(Translated from the Yiddish by Anna K. Pinski.)

LETTERS FROM ABROAD.

MUSIC IN GERMANY.

SIRS: Music, certainly the most German of all arts, is to-day in a rather precarious state in Germany. The demand for it far exceeds the present output. In each of the large cities there frequently are ten concerts an evening, and the season extends into the summer. The number of opera houses is increasing in spite of the economic distress; and the operetta companies almost compete in numbers with the movie-shows. Old compositions are being repeated without end. Standard works, the classics of musical literature, are ridden to death, for the public is even less eager for novelties in music than in the other arts. New compositions have hard sledding indeed. It costs as much to produce one single programme of well-tried musical novelties, as would have been adequate to maintain poor Schubert in opulence. This, of course, handicaps producers, who therefore much prefer ventures in chamber-music with their more modest outlay. Thus, favoured by the circumstances, chamber-music can show to-day more new compositions than the opera, where producers rarely muster sufficient courage to stage novelties. This applies to the provinces and, in an even increased degree, to Berlin. For Berlin is notorious for its scorn of all things new; an attitude that hits the unknown composer harder even than those who pass for authorities and whose names are a warrant of success.

The increase of the number of recitals by foreigners is of great interest and artistic benefit; but the possible advantage is to a great extent lost because of the lack of system. We in Berlin need an association for the fostering of new music, possessed of sufficient means to face the pecuniary risk incident upon missionary work done through the whole of Germany, and whose labour of love might extend to foreign countries; an association organized on broader lines than the small local societies, none of which manages to survive the economic distress of the day. It remains to be seen whether the "Internationale Gesellschaft für Neue Musik" will fill this need.

In surveying the character of modern music, one is impressed by its lack of unity. There is a good deal of music of course; but there is no real musical culture conscious of a fixed goal.

There are, however, a few important types that compel attention. The first of these has always been Richard Strauss, exponent of German music as it is known all

over the world. Every one of his works still is an event; hardly an opera or symphony of his has been dropped from the repertoires. His masterly technique, the sensuous accents and the bold rhythm of his music; his tempered modernity, and the discretion of his intellect which is not too heavily weighted with sentiment, have made him a leader whose style is the standard accepted by the public, and the school recognized by musicians. Strauss, indeed, is the father of the only productive movement of the latter days. Others stand more isolated. Hans Pfitzner is the typical German musician; with his sterling character, his uncompromising honesty, his scholarly technique, his romantic sentiment, and his conscious leaning towards Wagner; he is the best, the most sincere of composers. His opera "Palestrina" and his cantata "From the German Soul" are, with all their occasional stiffness, examples of genuine German art in the style of the old masters. Franz Schreker, whose operas are constantly making new conquests on the stage, is also a romantic, but much franker towards his public. Sensuous, dramatic, fond of a mystic charm of tone, he imparts to all his works a simplicity of meaning by developing the story, which he writes himself, into a distant, alluring sound. His idiom is not ultra-modern; he is, indeed, steeped in tradition, and experiences so much delight in it that his thoughts frequently lack sharpness of outline. Ferruccio Busoni is of the fourth type. This thoroughly Germanized Italian is one of those modern artists, frequently met with, whose personality is more important and more interesting than their works. He is spiritual both as a composer and performer. He has a noble scorn for all that is commonplace, strident, and dynamic; and the refinement and purity of his taste constantly increases as he gets older. Having passed through the stage of impressionism, he is now reverting to classicism, a living symbol of the present romantic tendency within the body of German music. While Strauss, without any pupils, has become an essential part of all music, these others are giving their attention to conducting schools; particularly the versatile Busoni, and Schreker who at present is trying to improve the Berlin High School. Each one of these men has a large number of disciples without, however, imparting his style to them to any great extent.

The differences in the natures of these great musicians may be observed in the other members of the guild. Max Schillings has been brought to the front by his colourful modern opera, "Mona Lisa." Schreker is perhaps the most accomplished of all our musicians; his chamber-music and his songs bear the marks of his culture as do his other compositions. He is a musical aristocrat, whose art neither rouses nor satisfies powerful emotions. Almost his opposite is the prolific Eugen d'Albert; a Beethoven interpreter turned dramatist in the manner of Puccini. D'Albert, indeed, can not produce lasting effects. As one looks further, one sees many academicians; so many writers of music one must call them, who can compose in a fluent and up-to-date manner; men like Klose, Braunsfels, and many other South Germans of the Munich School. All of them, South Germans, West Germans, North Germans, are undoubtedly in a process of differentiation; for they sacrifice to different divinities. The works of a talented Rhenish composer, Rudi Stephen, who was killed in the war, are much played in his home province; but in Berlin he is hardly known. Nor do Viennese composers fare better. The Schoenberg school is but little known in the north, and Schoenberg's works are played in a fragmentary fashion only. Young Korngold has, perhaps, penetrated the farthest. Hindemith, also a young man, is highly thought of in Frankfurt. He is said to be a hope of the opera; although at present he is regarded by North Germans only as a chamber-musician in the mak-

ing. But Berlin is a cosmopolitan market. By the side of the striking figure of the Baltic Erdmann stands the slowly rising Czech Krenek, one of Schreker's pupils; also Busoni's pupil, Philipp Jarnach, a native Spaniard. These are the modest eminences of the morrow.

So much then does a survey of musical production yield. To account for reproduction, which is the real musical nourishment of the German public, is impossible. However, I shall try to give a rough outline.

The composing performer is undoubtedly the most interesting figure in this group. Schnabel's ability as a pianist has never been challenged. His compositions, pronouncedly anti-romantic and written for judges of music, stand in strong contrast to his romantic playing. Busoni, the composer, is not popular; but Busoni, as a pianist, has a remarkably strong personality, with a delicacy of touch as arbitrary as it is fascinating.

Violinists rarely fall into the temptation of becoming composers. Klingler and Kreisler are too amiable for composers. Adolph Busch, one of the most exceptional violinists, stands and falls by his inimitable interpretations. Instrumental technique has reached the greatest heights of mastery; but the vocal technique is floundering in amateurish uncertainty about the problems of this decaying art. One may find here a fine but small coloratura; there a sweet voice of limited range; and again, technique without intelligence; or in another, a voice of sensuous charm threatened by chronic nervousness. An artist like Barbara Kemp, who has evolved the new opera-type of a dramatic soprano out of her inner consciousness, is to the public a joy and a delight.

What is being sung and played? It is the old, ever-repeated repertoire, which acquires in the hands of performers new shades and colours, because the traditional interpretations can barely keep it alive. Reger, who has striven, not always successfully, to bring unity into German music by joining the old with the new, has, in spite of the help of his friends, not succeeded in gaining full recognition upon concert-programmes. His leaning to an abstract conception finds no favour with the public. Dead composers, more sensuous than Reger, are held higher than the living Reger; Bruckner, for instance, who has found his circle of initiates, and Mahler, to whom a whole generation of young orchestral leaders has sworn fealty. The conductor, in fact, has become the great type of the virtuoso. Father Nikisch, the much-loved master of tones, the born wizard of the score, is dead. Furtwängler, most suggestive of leaders, is a general favourite in spite of being a more uneven performer than Nikisch. Bruno Walter, an adept of great fixity of purpose, is differently constituted; he is for Mahler and Mozart rather than for Wagner and Beethoven. Richard Strauss is always himself, the most individual of all of them. Mood and love sway his genius on given occasions, so that with all his waywardness he electrifies us. A crowd of capable, ambitious conductors are busily at work. The public watches them carefully, almost too carefully; for interest in the performer should not supplant interest in the work presented. The performance should never prosper to the detriment of the art. I am, etc.,

Berlin.

OSCAR BIE.

(Translated by Joseph Dick.)

THE THEATRE.

PITOEV AND REPERTOIRE.

IN Paris, in the season just past, Pitoev's company presented in French at the Champs Elysées, the following plays: Lenormand's "Les Ratés," Claude Anet's "Mlle. Bourrat," a dramatization of Oscar Wilde's "Dorian Gray," Pirandello's "Six Characters

in Search of an Author," Tolstoy's "Powers of Darkness," Shaw's "Candida" and "Androcles and the Lion," and Molnar's "Liliom." Pitoev's repertoire during the preceding year included plays by Lenormand, Chekhov, Oscar Wilde, Dunsany, Chesterton, Strindberg, and Shakespeare. Such cosmopolitanism is notable even in Europe. In the English-speaking theatres of America it is unheard of, except for the beginnings made by the Theatre Guild. Georges and Ludmilla Pitoev are Russian; an origin which carries often a gift for diverse languages. Furthermore they organized their theatrical enterprise and built up an extraordinarily capable and versatile company in Switzerland, that country of three native tongues. Since their establishment last year in Paris by Hébertot at the Champs Elysées, there has been no repertoire-theatre in the French capital which could compare with theirs in range or vital importance of production. For, whatever may be the judgment of the public as to this or that piece of individual acting, it is undeniable that Pitoev's company as a whole is a serious organization of sensitive and conscientious artists, and that their director has introduced more original ideas in interpretation and *mise-en-scène* than any other producer in Paris since his arrival.

The Pitoevs work together in translating and adapting. Georges Pitoev is not only the dramatic director but the complete *metteur-en-scène*, the originator of the setting, costumes, and lighting of all his productions. He and his wife usually carry the principal rôles, though they occasionally give place to other, capable actors, taking secondary parts or remaining out of the cast altogether. Naturally they are not equally successful in all the characters they portray. Pitoev has certain unpleasant mannerisms of speech and attitude which become distressingly monotonous with repetition. Madame Pitoev has been known to overact or underact in characters obviously foreign to her temperament. But with the recognition of these handicaps in the domination of a company by two leading actors, goes the conviction that such centralization—and particularly in consideration of Pitoev's versatility as a director—is the condition which leads to the greatest possible accomplishment in the creation of a solid theatrical repertoire.

Lenormand and Claude Anet are the only two French playwrights who figure on the list of this year's productions. "Les Ratés" outranks the other plays by Lenormand. Since its creation by Pitoev in Geneva, it has been given in cities as widely separated as Rome and Christiania. Reinhardt made a much discussed production of it in Vienna with the designs of Oscar Strand. Now the Theatre Guild is to do it for America. Structurally the play is important because it is presented in fourteen successive scenes without any sacrifice of unity. As to subject matter, the character studies and genre pictures of cheap provincial theatrical journeys would carry it alone. But it has more than these. There is cool and penetrating satire. There is a bold stylizing of action and telescoping of lines to achieve oneness of impression. The principal theme of the play is the struggle of two very human beings not only to extricate themselves from external hardships and a depressing atmosphere of shabby monotony, but, beyond that, to reach a poise both physical and mental in their relations to one another. Pitoev's staging of the play preserves its unity, and his interpretation of it intensifies its emotional quality. On the ordinary stage he erects a superstructure; and various portions of both levels are curtailed off in different shapes, furnished and lighted

differently, to suit different scenes; each space being adapted not only literally but atmospherically to its phase of the action. There is no mechanical chicanery such as the breathless rolling in and out of trick stages and silent galloping of actors in Svend Gade's staging of "Kapellmeister Kreisler." The scenes proceed in smooth sequence; and the simple dignity of the procedure is much more stimulating to the imagination.

Claude Anet's "Mlle. Bourrat," which is a study of provincial manners somewhat in the Russian style, gives every excuse for the ultra-naturalistic method of staging; and Pitoev sets up a regular house on the stage, with different rooms and doors and windows and corridors: nothing but the wall on the side next the audience is missing. The acting as well as the staging is meticulously realistic. I doubt that the play would be worth all this care, however, were it not for the beauty of Madame Pitoev's portrayal of the young provincial girl, simple, untouched by experience or convention. Here she sounds those depths of verity which she has at her command and which make her the ideal interpreter of those rôles of unpretentious and quiet tragedy so often found in Chekhov. Oscar Wilde's "Dorian Gray" loses most of its distinctive quality in dramatization. Only the bald externals remain. The cynical and conscious cleverness of the young dilettante in conversation—the sort of thing Wilde put into dramatic form himself when he wanted to—loses any value it might have as entertainment by not being smoothly or gracefully presented by the company. The staging is a combination of styles with one important innovation: a salon scene played partially behind draperies of transparent red gauze, an interesting realization of spiritual atmosphere.

The best production of Pitoev's that I have seen, indeed the best dramatic performance I recall having witnessed in any theatre, is his presentation of Pirandello's "Six Characters in Search of an Author." The play, in spite of its subtleties when read, commands, as America has had opportunity to discover, an immense dramatic force on the stage. Georges and Ludmilla Pitoev play the rôles of father and daughter themselves. Pitoev's gift for poignantly animating the unreal is present throughout: in the apparition of the Six Characters descending in the back-stage elevator, a group arranged in positions of fixed relationship like some inevitable family portrait; in every detail of the appearance and action of the Six—garbed in pure black and white, conventionalized in gesture and attitude, yet terribly alive—and in the disappearance of the same group, rising out of sight in a silence broken only by the faint shrill sound of the mechanical ascent. The dramatic pressure which animates the evolution of the story; the struggle between the actual and the imaginary, and the revelation of their overlapping identity; the ironic contrast between the complexity of life and the superficial simplicity of its imitations; all the richly humorous qualities of the satire; these are maintained without a cessation of that tension which is one of the most poignant emotional elements in the play.

Tolstoy's "Powers of Darkness," with its somewhat hysterical emotionalism, is simply and intelligently staged by Pitoev, and is not without its moments of power and pathos; but it attains no real distinction. In Shaw's "Candida," Pitoev gets right down to the fundamental human situation and throws it into high dramatic relief, leaving the brilliance of the dialogue to take care of itself. For "Androcles and the Lion," Pitoev has departed from his usual method and had the settings designed by some one

else: Frans Masereel, the well-known artist in wood-engraving. The forest scene is played before a fantastic jungle curtain in gigantic black and white foliage with a single swirl of bright green. The Roman masonry of the succeeding scenes is formalized into great black and white blocks, relieved in the outdoor scene by a flaming sun, and in the colosseum by the orange curtains of the emperor's box. The menagerie is represented by black and white pasteboard cut-outs; the costumes, including that of the Lion, are in black and white also, except for the crimson of the Emperor's suite. The action is played in a key of high burlesque, and the company achieves a humorous abandon, possible only through a thorough intellectual as well as histrionic grasp of the play. The most ingenious phase of the production is the presentation of the scene between Androcles and the Lion in the arena, alternating with glimpses of the spectators, by means of shadow silhouettes against a lighted curtain.

A typical example of a director's complete re-creation of a play through his personal interpretation of it, is Pitoev's version of "Liliom." There is scarcely a point of similarity between his production of the play and the one I saw in Berlin with Max Pallenberg in the leading rôle; and I judge from all reports that it is totally different also from the production made by the Theatre Guild in America, with Schildkraut as Liliom. Pitoev is very clear about the purpose of his individual and somewhat fantastic *mise-en-scène*. Neither Julie nor Liliom, he says, ever expressed the emotion that was in them. Julie's was to a certain degree expressed in action. Liliom's remained too far below the surface to achieve any concrete expression. It is the emotional quality of this silence that Pitoev aims to dramatize. The prologue, unhappily omitted in the production in Berlin, is here given its full value. It is done in an iris-shaped opening of the stage with great red lamps hanging at its edges. The circular canvas at the back and a set of steps leading from the fore-stage into a sloping platform which grows out of the circle, are bathed in a soft alluring green. At one side, the turning of a great wheel makes recurrent rose-coloured shadows against the tent. The crowd is enamoured of Liliom clothed in satin and carrying a big white flower. All the movement is in curves and glimpses, never sustained. Soon the crowd is out through the side boxes on to the fore-stage; and against black draperies the favourites of the circus perform their most popular tricks. This is all accompanied by music which evokes the atmosphere of the circus. The next set is really painted with light. It is a combination of coloured surfaces arranged at different angles: masses of grey and green on the sides, of blue and black separated by a line of bright rose-colour at the back; only a bench as property. And the encounter with the police in the park is stylized into something like a ballet episode. With all this, the love scene between Julie and Liliom, with its pitiful repressions and silences, becomes eloquent. For the home of Liliom and Julie, we have another background of massed colour—deep blue, and orange, and black—with a house at one side, and at the other a little green wagon of the sort the wandering circus acts of Europe use for both living and travelling. It is upon this that Liliom leaps to proclaim to the world that he is to become a father. In later scenes where this set is used, a different system of lighting gives it an entirely changed aspect.

The scene in which Liliom is lying dead near his wagon home, is given much of its unreal quality by the lighting. Julie holds in her hand the only light,

a flickering candle, which she later extinguishes. When Liliom, left alone in the darkness, is summoned by the celestial police, the sky flares again and again as with summer lightning, at the turning of their search-lights, before they appear in person to lead him away. The scene in heaven gives opportunity for the greatest range of fantasy, and Pitoev's imagination is more than equal to it. Every flat surface on the stage is of pure white, and set at some curious angle. The central office is entered by a sort of rift in one of these white surfaces. At one end of the inclined plane which is its floor, is suspended a white ladder leading both up to heaven and down to hell; and upon this the characters whose trials are held before Liliom's, proceed in their respective directions. From this tilted surface there are others leading downward and off to the side. The space between these and the background of clouds is occupied by a lavender telephone pole, and a white lamp-post bearing a single brilliant yellow-white star. Upon the clouds in the rear, appears the scarlet automobile of the heavenly chief of police, driven and cranked by a white-winged angel. The accompaniment of the scene is a flight of musical ideas such as might easily occur in the mind of Liliom. Indeed, there is no detail in the *mise-en-scène* which does not grow out of the fancies, grandiose or infantile, which Liliom directly or indirectly expresses in the play. Here the lighting plays an important rôle as always. As Liliom is led off for his sixteen years of purgatory, the lights gradually melt away, the star last, till finally the stage is lighted only by the tiny glow of the cigarette which he has characteristically demanded of the heavenly police before plunging into outer darkness. Throughout the performance, characters, as well as setting and action, are seen through the prism of Pitoev's conception of the play. The crook who is Liliom's pal is not a naturalistic character at all, but a bright bouncing figure in black and white and scarlet, the sort of gay and care-free creature he must have seemed, a little wistfully, to Liliom's imagination. Pitoev's portrayal of Liliom is never naturalistic. He dresses him in mauve which takes on the colour of the scene he is playing, and he puts a suggestion of subdued flame in the scarf he wears about his neck. He is much more the repressed sentimentalist, the disappointed and futile romanticist, than he is the ineffectual, sometimes swaggering, but likeable crook of Pallenberg's portrayal. The other members of the cast play in the manner of straight realism, and in spite of this *mélange* of styles, they accomplish it with the most exact and satisfying attention to the slightest shade of feeling. Madame Pitoev's Julie is a thing of perfection: every attitude, every intonation, her complete and motionless silence even, charged with that emotional content which only exceptional actors can command. This production of "Liliom" I saw twice; and after the second seeing, as well as after the first, it seemed to me—if not entirely satisfactory—to have an unprecedented power of stimulating imaginative connotations of its own.

I do not mean to make Pitoev appear a superman, or to do him the injustice of helping to create a myth about him. His shortcomings as an actor I have noted above. But as a sincere and sensitive artist with the background of a scholar as well as a wide range of interest, and as a gifted director with a brilliant imagination, a strong power of initiative, and executive ability of a high order, I think it would not be easy to find his equal. To America his example ought to be of inestimable value.

FLORENCE GILLIAM.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

THE LATEST DECOY.

SIRS: A new wave of propaganda for nationalization is rolling in upon us. Mines must be nationalized immediately. Railways should be nationalized soon. With each victory the zeal of the liberals for a further extension of nationalization will wax more militant.

Presumably all of us, even the liberals, admit that an extension of militarization within the country begets militarism. Surely we also grant that the elevating power of more imperialists extends and strengthens Yankee imperialism. Why, then, do our far-famed pacifist and international journals join the boosters of nationalism?

To such questions they reply that nationalization is the logical escape from the chaos into which the present anarchy in the coal- and railway-industries is plunging us. Is it? Seventy-five years of European history shows us that the common people in their co-operative organizations can take over industry and commerce from the privileged interests and create order out of anarchy. What the State takes over is never relinquished to the people again—until revolution comes.

Nationalization of basic industries is the particular decoy being used at present to get the liberals down out of the clouds and within gunshot of the masters of things-as-they-are; and the dear birds are racing for the opportunity to be taken in. They talk in terms of "democratization" or "socialization of industry," while they are really working to transfer billions of dollars of America's wealth from the control of large financial interests to the control of the paid employees of these same interests down in Washington.

Nationalization is becoming all the rage just now. A few years hence it may become a devastating scourge. I am, etc.,
New York City.

CEDRIC LONG.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

SIRS: I beg leave to call attention to two facts that strike me as being of possible interest to your readers. The manufacturers whom I serve as accountant pay an excise tax on only one item of a long list subject to this tax; yet on this one item the amount paid is far in excess of the income tax on the entire business. The income tax is about the average, not below. I have never mentioned this to anybody who was not surprised to know of it. Last month I had the joy of paying fifty-seven dollars as a fine for mailing the monthly check for the excise tax a day late. The Government parasite that (and I say "that" intentionally) collected the fine had the insolence which I supposed was prevalent only in Germany.

The other fact is best told in the *Scientific American* for September, in an article about our reserves of energy. If I remember correctly the writer states that nothing but governmental restriction is in the way of our having now a greater supply of energy for motive power in the form of alcohol than we already have in the form of gasoline. How is this for protection to Standard Oil? I suppose it is only incidental that Mr. John D. Rockefeller subsidized prohibition. For Mr. Henry Ford also supports prohibition, knowing as he must know how free alcohol would stimulate his industry. I read Mr. Ford's paper, and much as I admire a great deal that he has done, I have for a long time measured him as just enough of a Puritanical fanatic to believe it better for a hundred million people to pay a tax like this than that an occasional wretch should have the miserable satisfaction of drinking alcohol. I am, etc.,

Oak Park, Illinois.

L. G. BOSTEDO.

SCRAPS OF PAPER.

SIRS: It must have come as a shock to some of your readers, as it certainly did to me, to learn a few days ago from the British and the French official correspondence that the British Government considers that the French occupation of the Ruhr is contrary to the treaty of Versailles and illegal; that Great Britain has always been of that opinion; that she was so advised by her lawyers nearly a year ago; and that she privately so notified the French Government at the time the occupation was undertaken. And yet, Great Britain openly consented

to that unlawful act, concealing her knowledge of its illegality, and openly protested on the ground of its inexpedience, and that mildly. Talk about a scrap of paper! What cynical hypocrisy! Here is a treaty only five years old, and two of the principal parties thereto conspire to violate it in order to oppress and rob the weaker party and to deceive the public opinion of the world. Germany broke the Belgian treaty to save her neck; France broke this one in the mere hope of getting some cash; and England was her accomplice and boasts of it. It now appears, therefore, that the seizure of German mines and property, the imprisonment and execution of Germans in the region of the Ruhr, and all the rest of it have been in violation of right and of the so-called "honour" of those two Allied Governments. What is the proper term to apply to such conduct, to such cowardly oppression of a fallen foe, to such a breach of faith? The queer part is, that neither the British nor the American press appears to realize what this disclosure means to a disinterested mind. And they talk of German mentality! I am, etc.,

Paris.

A. B. CRUIKSHANK.

BOOKS.

PLUTARCH WITH A DIFFERENCE.

THERE is a general belief that history, as it approaches our own era, swells to a sort of *crescendo* of credibility. Plutarch, Thucydides, Juvenal, the anonymous authors of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, are venerable and accredited figures, not because they are haloed with authenticity, but because the data by which their utterances might be controlled (using the word in its happy French sense) simply do not exist. Modern history chooses to start with the Reformation and Renaissance mainly because these movements correspond with the invention of movable type. Without this, the quickened interest in affairs of this world due to the lifting of the obsession with the world to come, might have spent itself in one generation, and the general articulateness of thought and speech which was the result of the great change might have perished in the religious turmoil of the next. Caxton and Gutenberg, far more than Luther or Machiavelli, are the founders of modern history. They founded it by providing the historico-critical historian with the mass of information which is the raw material of his craft.

That the printed word has also provided the historian with a great mass of misinformation is a truth not so clearly perceived, or at any rate, perceived most clearly by thinkers who veil their thought in paradox. Two thousand years ago the greatest thinker of all speculated on what might happen to the world if the salt with which it is periodically salted lost its savour. The surmise as to what history may become if its sources are poisoned or clouded is one almost as intolerable to the upright mind. The honest historian who thinks he has discovered attempts, however plausibly inspired, to deface the facts that are his only concern, will not allow respect for national gods or national vanity to stay his verifying hand. Even yet we are not all rotarians, content to take our history on a pragmatic basis, and to wander in circles for the mere exhilaration of air and exercise. There are still some of us who want to get somewhere.

Jean de Pierrefeu, whose "Plutarque a Menti" upsets a good many theories of the great war that had all but got themselves comfortably established, is one of these honest—shall we say daring?—souls. He has been a member of the Headquarters Staff, as his book "G. Q. G. Secteur I" bears witness. He has seen history in the making, or better, in the cooking; and he seems to have scant respect for the material ac-

cepted with such docility by the official historians of the war. He tells us—and his opinion deserves all the weight that familiarity bestows—that operation-orders and reports are as often as not *ex post facto* devices, designed to cover failure with a false glamour of partial success, or to lend to fortuitous and accidental victories the atmosphere of a well-conceived and co-ordinated plan. In the homely language of the street, they are alibis put forward by the professional soldier in the interests of his profession. De Pierrefeu's book is a sustained effort to sift truth from falsehood, to demolish legends of the great war before they become fixed in the permanent fabric of history, and to put the French people on their guard against any appropriation in the future of the vast business of war by the military caste. This, he maintains, broke down at the very start, and was virtually pushed into victory by the national will-to-conquer, helped of course by the enormous material and moral support of France's Allies.

It is easy to conceive that such a conception of the war is a bitter draught for the national *amour-propre* of the French, not to be swallowed save under protest. It is made all the less palatable by the fact that the three outstanding victories of the war, upon the Marne, at Verdun, and upon the entire front in September, 1918, were all won by French generals, and attributed by the world at large to French military genius. It has needed only a little overinsistence here and there upon the fortunate phases of the long struggle, with such a selection of facts from the general confusion as can hardly be termed dishonest, to place the war, where it certainly does not belong, in the long category of authentic French victories. We witness to-day the fatal consequences to peace and world-settlement with which this initial misconception has been fraught.

In the strictly military order, de Pierrefeu has his preferences. For him, Gallieni is the man of destiny, far beyond Foch, of whom the author traces a strange and rather disturbing picture. The scrupulous adherence to documentary evidence which he imposes on himself fails to conceal his hero-worship for the grim, spectacled colonial general who saved France in the early days of September, 1914, or his exasperation at the timidity or subserviency of the official historians, who, in apportioning their praise for the battle of the Marne, have accorded to Gallieni what he considers a very inadequate share of glory. While not affirming categorically that Joffre was ready to leave Paris to its fate, he adduces strong evidence to show that the future marshal altogether failed to realize that Paris could be made the focus of a general counter-offensive. Official historians, concerned to show that everything worked out according to plan, have made much of a letter addressed by Joffre to M. Millerand on 3 September, in which mention is made of a general scheme to "prepare for a forthcoming offensive in unison with the British army and the mobile troops of the Paris garrison." De Pierrefeu analyses the celebrated letter phrase by phrase, and has no difficulty in showing that its passages are mutually self-contradictory. The marshal speaks of waiting some, or even several days ("*quelques jours*"), before the decisive movement. He stresses the need of giving his hard-pressed army repose, and, referring to the general Allied situation, emphasizes his policy of "gaining time by holding back the German forces as far as possible." When all tribute has been paid to the traditional phlegm and assurance of the impassive *generalissimo*, de Pierrefeu is certainly justified in concluding that no stranger or vaguer view of a mili-

¹ "Plutarque a Menti." Jean de Pierrefeu. Paris: Bernard Grasset.

tary situation ever issued from supreme headquarters on the eve of a decisive battle.

Not only on the occasion of the battle of the Marne but on many others, de Pierrefeu speculates on the tendency of official historians to cover up the jealousies and misunderstandings which existed between leaders, and to give a false appearance of harmony to operations which, even to the lay mind, are patently admissions of former mistakes. He deplores the vicious principle which propaganda and the necessity of impressing the outside world, at all costs, have introduced into the telling of history.

It is considered harmful for the preservation of society to assert that those who had the conduct of the war in their hands ever committed a fault. To do so is to engender mistrust among the ranks of the army, to foment anarchy, disorder, to favour anti-militarism, play the game of Germany, etc. etc. . . . An incredible conspiracy of silence exists in France to-day. No one dares to write the truth, it is only whispered in corners, and when some one breaks the agreement, rather than admit he speaks the truth, he is disavowed.

De Pierrefeu's study of Foch, the man of destiny in whose nervous hand was placed the thunderbolt forged by four years of ceaseless work, is vivid but subversive. No portrait of Foch approaching reality, the author believes, has yet been traced. He is in a fair way to become the most legendary of all the legendary figures. We are shown by the hand of one whose daily duties brought him into close personal contact with the great commander, the strange effervescence of character, the lack of physical repose, the jerky elliptical sentences, often completed by a gesture which Weygand alone could interpret for the anxious Allied generals. Foch, for our author, is the typical man of war, in the sense in which the lion is the typical beast of prey. A past master in military science, his knowledge seemed to evaporate in action and to leave him dependent on a kind of happy intuition. In many of his orders there was not the vestige of a plan. "People would be very much surprised if it were known how far, at times, he pushed his contempt for doctrine." He was not interested in artillery or its problems. He called aviation "a sport . . . zero, as far as the army is concerned." "Attack!" accompanied by a furious gesture, was his habitual response to anyone bringing him bad news. "It was the supreme good fortune of Foch that, owing to the very make-up of his ardent imagination, he ignored the real conditions of modern war. . . . Action has on him a marked nervous and muscular effect: he has the illusion that he is taking an actual physical part in the struggle." This light of military science, in fact, personified the great quality of flexibility which makes the Frenchman a master when war is an affair of expedients. A less great soldier than Ludendorff, whom the author considers the outstanding traditional genius of the war, Foch divined the great change that had taken place, scrapped his theories, and resumed his function in the trenchant phrase "killing more Boches."

To this terse and sinister phrase of the Allied *generalissimo*, struck out, one would almost say, by the contact of reality with instinct, de Pierrefeu sees all future wars reduced. That the great war has ended war is a delusion no longer entertained. But it has at least stripped the mean and cruel business of slaughter of the illusions and artifices which elevated it for a few centuries (a brief interlude as we have learned to count time) into the ranks of the sciences.

Just as if there were no such things in the world as strategy or tactics [says the author of 'Plutarque'], two peoples at war raised a rampart of living bodies to bar one another's

way. Deep trenches, bristling with barbed wire and flanked by machine and field guns, rendered this living barrier each day more impassable. In one stroke all the rules of the war-game were abolished. The real revelation of military decadence lies in the fact that civilized peoples, trained for war over long years and led by a corps of scientifically instructed officers, were forced to adopt this primitive means of shelter. When the two or three known rules of the game had been tried and tried in vain . . . when military science admitted its impotence to manœuvre such masses, there was nothing to be done save to let the killing go on till one or other of the adversaries gave way. Behold us back at the epoch when two hordes of barbarians, howling their war-cries, fell upon one another hand to hand, and slew and slew until the feeble group had disappeared.

It goes without saying that in M. Léon Daudet's "l'Hecatombe"¹ we are not to look for anything approaching de Pierrefeu's painstaking efforts to present facts and dates in their true perspective. The mind of the arch-Camelot (one had almost written Kamelot) is of simpler texture. In his personal and political preferences and antipathies M. Daudet possesses a key not only to the tangled peripatetics of the great war, but to practically everything mundane. By a simple confrontation of dates he is able to elucidate the spasmodic struggle for us and to assign each reflex to a nerve-centre which he locates in and around the bureau of M. Malvy, Minister of the Interior during the first three years of the war. Verdun resists victoriously from February until October of 1916. Would you know why? "The reason is simple. From the very opening of the attack we [M. Daudet and his friends] were conducting an offensive of extreme violence against *Le Bonnet Rouge* and its protectors." On the 8th, 9th and 10th of August, 1918, the German army gives way. Would you learn what nerved the arm of the Allied fighting man in this supreme conjuncture? Daudet can tell you. "I have it on the authority of many combatants and friends that the news of the condemnation of Malvy had an electrifying effect the moment it was known on the front. . . . I know him [General Sarraill] to be destitute of common sense because he was an ardent Dreyfusard." Hatred like M. Léon Daudet's is, after all, a sub-species of genius.

HENRY LONGAN STUART.

RUSSIAN SOIL.

"THE GENTLEMAN FROM SAN FRANCISCO" brought the name of Bunin prominently before the literary public. "The Village"² shows more clearly than ever what a strain he has to put on his talent in order to achieve a picture of life. It is an account of the development of two brothers: the one practical, ignorant and tough-minded; the other, visionary, half-educated and sensitive. Their drama is set against the incredibly depressing background of a Russian village, into which, after struggling for a time as independent units, they are at last absorbed. Peasants who have mounted a little in the world, they are middle-aged already when the story begins, and deeply dissatisfied, the one in his practical activities, the other in his hopes for Russia. The atmosphere of the village, where everything goes to ruin, where shiftlessness is so universal that effort of any kind seems meaningless, idiotic, finally drains all vitality, all faith in the efficacy of action, out of them. They deteriorate gradually, mechanically, like old clothes left to rot in the damp; and hopelessly, without the power to live or to die, Bunin

¹ "l'Hecatombe. Recits et Souvenirs Politiques, 1914-1918." Léon Daudet. Paris: Nouvelle Librairie Nationale.

² "The Village." Ivan Bunin. Translated by Isabel F. Hapgood. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

leaves them. It is a tremendous theme; one can imagine what Dostoevsky or even Chekhov might have done with it. But Bunin leaves us definitely and profoundly dissatisfied; and when we reach the end we realize with a shock that he has been adroitly avoiding the problem the whole time. He taps only the easiest of the resources of his theme; all the rest he does not touch, perhaps because he distrusts his imaginative powers, perhaps because he knows their limitations. Neither of the chief characters in the book is realized; neither has that touch of intimacy which would make their drama moving. Their outward appearance, their clothes, the houses where they live, the village in the background: all this we can see. We see the people walking about; we hear their voices, listen to their jokes and their complaints; all the spectacle of a communal existence enigmatically sinking through shiftlessness to apathy passes before our eyes. But we comprehend nothing of it; and we feel that it is as much a puzzle to Bunin as to ourselves, and that while his eye has taken it in with astonishing clearness, his imagination has not been able to breathe the spirit of life into what he has seen. Some of the minor characters are rendered with the bright distinctness of cameos; but they are seen as cameos, as pieces of moving sculpture rather than living creatures; and one is not surprised to learn from Bunin in the autobiographical sketch which prefaces the book that "I had a passion for painting, which, I believe, has manifested itself in my literary works." Few writers have had such an appreciation of minute physiological changes, of the twitch of an eyelid, or some trick of the mouth; but these satisfy him in themselves, and a curious absorption in the physical detail prevents him from going any farther, from inquiring what drama of passion or of character lies behind these external signs. He renders only what his eye sees; and this gives to his talent a curiously mechanical perfection, a mechanical effect also, which in time displeases us.

Consequently the novel is as a whole a little wearisome, in spite of the vividness of all the details. The distinctness of the setting, arranged as if for the coming of a real human *dénouement*, exhilarates us until the middle of the book is passed; then we begin to realize that it will be like this to the end; and we become less and less appreciative of the descriptions which the author keeps on setting down, consummately and interminably. There is, indeed, nothing scamped in the book; and sometimes we even wish that there was, the effect of monotony is so strong. Out of the wreckage of the novel the reader takes away only a desolating impression of the deliquescence of the life of the peasant in Russia; a picture of all the details of that life powerful enough to correct the more idyllic pictures which Tolstoy and others have drawn. "The Village" aroused a great deal of opposition in Russia; and one can very well understand it; for the picture is so depressing that, if one were a Russian, one would have to protest in sheer self-defence. Bunin is not content to let his novel stand as a description of the peasant life of Russia only. To "the village" he evidently attaches a symbolical meaning. "All Russia is nothing but a village," he makes one of his characters say, "Get that firmly fixed in your noddle! Look about you: is this a town, in your opinion? The flocks jam the street every evening—they kick up such a dust that you can't see your next-door neighbour. But you call it a 'town'!" The book is an unrelieved record of dirt, discomfort, ignorance, superstition, sloth and ferocity; and in this environment the Russian peasant, if we are to believe Bunin, lives thoughtlessly, without effort and without hope. The fact is that the people depicted in this novel are not peasants at all in any real sense of the word, but wasters decaying on the land. They have all

the cruelty of primitive races with all the vices of people who have lived too long, who have lived on the land so long that it has corrupted them. "The Village" is mediocre as a work of art; but as a picture of peasant life in Russia it is very interesting, and should be read by every student of the different kinds of poverty.

EDWIN MUIR.

A LAUREATE IN LOVE.

DURING the last century Wordsworth's family, under the prudent advice of the Bishop of Salisbury, took the utmost pains to destroy all references to the poet's liaison with Annette Vallon. A tradition of it, however, survived with the Coleridges, and through them reached the ears of Mr. Hutchinson who finally gave the necessary hint to those two indefatigable investigators, Professors Emile Legouis and George McLean Harper.

With regard to the actual facts of the case the slim volume, "Wordsworth in a New Light,"¹ presents little that is new. The story, however, is of the kind that bears repetition. In the case of almost any other great literary figure such belated revelations in regard to personal conduct would hardly command attention: with William Wordsworth as their hero they take to themselves a most lively interest. There has always been something ambiguous, something provocative of humorous malice, about the simple genius of this great man. The difficulty has been to reconcile his sanctimonious way of taking life with that hyper-sensual reaction to nature which, because of some strange vegetable quality in it, has so arrested and beguiled his critics. There has also been from the first a certain uneasy wonder among lovers of his poetry at the complacent way in which he mingles banality with inspiration in the swing of the same stride; the inspiration coming as abruptly and departing as swiftly as a gust of wind which ruffles the dull surface of a muddy pond. We know from his poem "Peter Bell the Third" what Shelley thought of Wordsworth's attitude to nature:

But from the first 'twas Peter's drift
To be a kind of moral eunuch,
He touched the hem of nature's shift,
Felt faint—and never dared uplift
The closest all-concealing tunic.

Indeed, the spectacle of William Wordsworth mooning about over the Westmoreland fells seems to have struck his more ribald contemporaries as not a little diverting; they being particularly tickled by his apparent immunity from those importunate emotions which are especially apt to bewilder and distract normal human beings. How had this sedate man, who "looked like a horse," come by so fortunate a detachment, they wondered. De Quincey takes it upon himself to declare that Wordsworth "had not the feelings within him which make total devotion to a woman possible. . . . A lover, I repeat, in a passionate sense of the word, Wordsworth could not have been." Ah, could that irreverent and incorrigible gossip but have known!

It appears that Wordsworth met Annette Vallon during his second trip to the Continent in 1792. That the constitutional deliberation of his slow-moving nature could under certain conditions undergo a singular acceleration is sufficiently proved by the fact that his daughter, Caroline, was born to him before the year was out. There is, however, nothing to lead us to suppose that this event at Blois interrupted for any long period his customary composure. He touched and kissed the little "pink cap" that the mother had made for her baby and then forthwith took ship for England. The declaration of war between

¹ "Wordsworth in a New Light," Emile Legouis. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. \$1.00.

the two countries makes it improbable that he revisited France till 1802. Several letters passed between the two lovers and between Annette and the generous Dorothy Wordsworth. The poet's guardians were duly put in touch with the circumstances of the case and, as might have been anticipated, began to entertain "certain prejudices against dear William." At this juncture, however, thanks to the fortunate legacy from Raisly Calvert, the poet was able to advance upon his way unperturbed.

Indeed, as M. Emile Legouis reminds us, he gravely occupied himself at this period in composing a series of poems with desertion as their chief motive; as, for example, "The Mad Mother" which is undoubtedly "one of Wordsworth's most moving ballads, the song of the wife suckling her baby far from the husband who deserted her."

In 1802 he feels a disposition to marry Mary Hutchinson, but before taking any definite step sets out with his sister to see Annette. They spend a month together at Calais—William, Dorothy, Annette, and Caroline. "Everything seems to have passed simply, gently, quietly, without either transports or outbreaks." One evening, standing on the old wooden pier at Calais, Wordsworth is moved to write one of his most sublime sonnets:

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free;
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration.

M. Legouis has his own comment to make on this. "To us who are better informed," he says, "that almost sacerdotal blessing offers a striking example of the way in which Wordsworth was apt to solemnize the most profane passages of his life." The same accusation might doubtless be brought against certain passages of "The Prelude." One would certainly conjecture as much from the stray references in the poem to those stirring revolutionary times for the most part spent by him on the banks of the Loire, "that very magnificent river":

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive
But to be young was very heaven!

Upon their return to England we are given in Dorothy's diary a glimpse of the poet in one of his most characteristic moods: "Sat upon Dover cliffs and looked upon France with many a melancholy and tender thought." Years pass; and then in July, 1817, Caroline is married to a young Frenchman named Beaudouin. In the register of the Parish Church of Sainte-Croix is still to be seen a record of the ceremony; a record which his nephew, the late prelate of Salisbury, would doubtless have gladly seen obliterated, but which to us most happily testifies to something essentially honest in the poet's behaviour: "Caroline Wordsworth, major daughter of William Wordsworth, landowner, residing at Grasmer, Kendan (Kendal) in the county of Westmoreland, who gives his consent." The wife becomes the mother of three little girls, the eldest being named Louise Dorothée after her aunt.

One other strange regathering of the Wordsworth family took place. Was it upon that fortunate occasion when William, Dorothy, Annette, Caroline, Mrs. Wordsworth and the little Louise met together at the Louvre at one o'clock on 2 October, 1820, that the grandfather solemnly presented his daughter with those two beautifully bound volumes of his poems, one of which remains to this day a treasured possession of the poet's French descendants? After all, he could hardly have given her a more dignified or apposite gift.

It appears that Annette Vallon died two years before the ageing poet was made Poet Laureate. The official record of the event is not without its own pathos: "Died 1841, Marie Anne Vallon, known as Williams, an employee, aged seventy-five years, born at Blois, Spinster."

LEWELYN POWYS,

AN INDUSTRIAL APOCALYPSE.

It has been a matter of common observation that writers on economic and social problems from the standpoint of radicalism and reform have been more prolific of criticisms of the existing system than fertile in what are called constructive suggestions. In 1919, however, when the problem of the control of the railway-system, temporarily assumed by the United States Government, was being widely discussed, a plan for avoiding such extremes as ownership and operation by the State or unconditional surrender to the private owners, was brought forward, which aroused the conservative press and Mr. Ivy Lee to almost hysterical denunciation. The author of this plan was the late Glenn E. Plumb, a progressive and broad-minded attorney who possessed a deep interest in the welfare of the labouring classes and the public. With the aid of Mr. W. G. Roylance, Mr. Plumb elaborated his plan for the control and operation of the railway-system into a comprehensive scheme of economic reconstruction designed to secure industrial democracy, promote a more effective type of international trade and advance world-peace.

The book¹ is much more than an effort to tabulate the specific details of a new scheme of industrial organization. It includes a history of the democratic movement as a whole, with a brief survey of certain tendencies in the direction of industrial democracy. There follows an admirable, and in most respects an unanswerable, indictment of the nature and operation of our modern economic order. Mr. Plumb presents the essentials of his programme for the realization of a system of economic efficiency, justice, co-operation and democracy. This generalized statement is followed by an effort to show in detail how the scheme may be applied to the solution of the problems of transportation, the coal-industry, markets, banking and credit, agriculture, international trade and industrial conflict.

The nature of Mr. Plumb's proposals may be briefly summarized in the following manner. Industries are to be divided into four classes: national public utilities, such as railways, the postal system and the telegraph system; State and municipal public utilities, such as heating, lighting, traction and telephone industries; general basic industries other than public utilities, such as those resting on grants, privileges, exploitation of natural resources and monopolistic control; and all other industries. Public utilities of all types will be owned by the appropriate Governments, but will be leased for operation to a corporation which can issue neither stock nor bonds. Prior to the earning of income through operation, funds will be provided for the initial costs and expenses by the issuance of public bonds, which will constitute a first lien on the property and assets. The corporation will be managed by a board of directors elected by, and representing equally, management, labour and the public. The rates charged will be determined by a suitable public authority, and the wages and salaries by the board of directors. Any surplus will be divided equally between management and labour, on the one hand, and the public on the other. In the case of excessive surplus, rates may be lowered and salaries and wages increased. The division of the surplus between management and labour will be so arranged as to stimulate management to greater efficiency, which will in turn make possible higher salaries and wages and lower rates.

The same general principles govern the plan suggested for the ownership and operation of other industries. The Government will incorporate such organizations as desire to operate a basic industry and are ready to contribute

¹ "Industrial Democracy: A Plan for Its Achievement." Glenn E. Plumb and William G. Roylance. New York: B. W. Huebsch. \$2.00.

labour or money and property to the enterprise. The investor of money or property who desires to assume the risks inherent in an industrial venture will have issued to him transferable capital stock of a par value equal to the investment. Those who seek freedom from risk and responsibility will receive bonds with a relatively lower fixed and guaranteed income. All the employees, from the manager to the unskilled labourer, are to receive "labour stock" of no par value, non-transferable and valid only as long as the particular individual remains in the employ of the corporation. This stock will carry voting-power, so determined that the employee with an annual wage or salary income of \$2000 will have as much voting-strength as an investor who receives \$2000 in dividends on his capital stock. Salaries and wages will be determined according to the decision of the directors representing capital and labour stock, and will be paid before dividends and interest. Any surplus over wages, salaries, dividends and interest will be divided into two equal parts, corporate surplus and public surplus. The former may be disposed of as the members of the corporation desire, but the latter must be devoted to the extension of the business and the retirement of capital. Proper publicity is to be ensured, as well as provision for meeting such liabilities as maintenance, depreciation and a sinking-fund. While Mr. Plumb is forced to display heroic exegetical powers at times in order to adapt his programme to the diverse requirements of every type of industrial, commercial and financial enterprise, it must be admitted that he is not guilty of fatal inconsistencies or contradictions.

Fair-minded readers will admit that the "Plumb Plan" has the merit of comprehensiveness and the effort to conserve the valid interests of capital, enterprise and labour. It is far less of a single-track panacea than most current programmes of reform, and calls for no complete disruption of the present economic order. As far as our economic problems can be solved by a change in the form of control and operation of existing machinery it may be conceded that Mr. Plumb has offered perhaps the most satisfactory programme yet put forward.

A number of criticisms and queries necessarily arise, however, with respect to any book that purports to lead us out of our economic impasse; and to this rule Mr. Plumb's work is no exception. His exploitation of history to illustrate the growth of democracy is typical of the lawyer's practice of "briefing" history to serve his own particular purposes for the moment; and the fact that he distorts it in the interest of a liberal point of view no more excuses him than it does the legerdemain of Mr. James E. Beck or Mr. W. D. Guthrie. Many would regard it as the most serious weakness of the book that Mr. Plumb proposes to remedy our economic difficulties by giving us more of those democratic methods, the practicability of which some are beginning to doubt even for the simpler situations of politics. He largely ignores the necessity of creating new motives in industry, and assumes that by giving labour greater power we shall secure higher productivity; something which is scarcely borne out by the history of the American Federation of Labour or the more powerful railway-unions. There is no guarantee that management and labour, which could together outvote capital in his new order, would not so raise salaries and wages as always to absorb any probable surplus. He apparently fails to recognize the fact that the failure of the worker to feel an absorbing interest in his work or to develop the instinct of workmanship inheres largely in modern industrial organization, and is not produced solely by the capitalistic organization of society and the domination of the pecuniary motive. He gives little attention to the findings of those who have endeavoured to apply scientific psychology to an analysis of

labour-problems, and "motives in economic life"; or to that tendency, on the part of the salaried classes, towards "psychic identification" with the representatives and institutions of capitalism, which makes them perhaps the most rigidly opposed of all groups to any plans for economic reconstruction. Nor does his scheme assure any adequate method of securing special ability for management. These are a few reasons for holding that Mr. Plumb's plan is not all-inclusive.

HARRY ELMER BARNES.

SAFE AND SANE ROMANTICISM.

MR. VACHEL LINDSAY¹ is, as he himself informs us, a Campbellite whose forefathers came from Kentucky. That is to say, he expects this capricious and uncertain world of ours soon to come to an end, and the millennium to be ushered in by angels in nightgowns blowing upon brazen trumpets. This prospect does not in the least appal him. On the contrary, he and those who think like him are certain to be the saved, and to share in a Paradise which will closely resemble the local fair-grounds with a three-ring circus thrown in for good measure; plenty of elephants, popcorn, pretty girls, and nothing stronger to drink than pink lemonade. In other words, Mr. Lindsay is a Protestant in a country which has never had a Catholic tradition. His Protestantism is so peculiarly American that it is practically empty of every intellectual or moral issue in life, beyond politics, temperance, the ecstasy of avowing oneself a saved soul, and the feeling of individual expansiveness that is so proudly called "one-hundred-percent Americanism." It is not like European Protestantism, a reversion to grim pagan earnestness, or a desperate individual protest against Catholic ignorance and indifference. It is far more sure of itself, sure that the world will experience salvation, will be better to-morrow, and will start depositing money in the local savings bank the day after, in order to buy masterpieces of art. For beauty, too, is it not a gospel? Then let us moralize it a little, and see if we can not make it one.

This mental attitude immediately explains Mr. Lindsay's popularity outside the borders of America. I recall seeing an article by a French critic of ability in which he was proclaimed as the sole successor to Whitman; and the fact that many English writers have for some time past considered him as almost the one American poet worth considering, is notorious. It is obvious that the European critic, and even the European reader, yearns to think of the American as a creature still unsophisticated, still belonging to the wilds, and unteachable. To regard Americans in this light satisfies the European's obstinate romantic yearnings for escape, and provides him in turn with a pretext for forgetting all about the two or three thousand years of hell of which he is a product. But when we come to the United States, the fact of Mr. Lindsay's popularity remains unexplained. Is it a truth that we, as a nation, are so completely satisfied with ourselves as to accept our middle-Western, Chatauqua-lecturing, Billy-Sunday-evangelistic civilization as the final efflorescence of unnumbered ages? I, for one, do not believe it. Neither such remnants of intellectual integrity as remain in New England, or in the Southern States, or in the West, are likely to uphold Mr. Lindsay as pure gospel. What is the reason, then, that he, alone among American poets with the exception of Mr. Robinson, has lived to see his collected works gathered in one volume?

The answer to that question is, that Mr. Lindsay has lectured and read his poems upon innumerable platforms in the United States. He tells us so himself. In other words, he has, to put it bluntly, traded upon his person-

¹ "Collected Poems." Vachel Lindsay. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$3.50.

ality. That is not to say that he has not also written occasionally good poetry. He has. He has written a handful of good poems and the inevitable number of bad ones. To disengage the bad from the good, it is only necessary to pick him up at those pages on which he forgets to be morally stimulating and becomes merely amusing. "The Congo," "The Chinese Nightingale," "The Golden Whales of California," "The Kallyope Yell," and one or two others: that is the indestructible residuum that will remain when Mr. Lindsay is no longer able to stand on the platform in the flesh. The interesting thing about these is that they are all the same poem. In each one their author is striving to write, or rewrite, a "Song of Myself," in the terms not of experience, but of make-believe. He is the boy who has never grown up, and who wishes to persuade us that his world of sublimated fantasy is better, or at least equally as good, as ours of bleak reality.

A belated Romanticist? Very likely. Only Mr. Lindsay's Romanticism is so profoundly different from that of the earlier Romanticists! Where their favourite heroes were Cain, Satan, Cœur de Lion, Brummell, and Byron, his are Amenophis IV, Moses, Confucius, St. Paul, Bryan, Roosevelt and Wilson. The nearest he can come to a hero who was not completely respectable is Napoleon—and even Napoleon had his bourgeois side, as every poet has learned to his cost. If he is a Romanticist, Mr. Lindsay is eminently a safe and sane one.

It is interesting to compare his work with that of another American poet, who, like him, has lived to witness the gathering together of his collected works in one volume, but who, unlike him, has never lectured upon platforms. I have already referred to Mr. Robinson. The difference between his attitude and Mr. Lindsay's is profoundly instructive. Mr. Robinson does not wish to preach anything. He does not consider the world as in the immediate path of salvation. He looks on human life as a struggle in the dark, and the destiny that controls human affairs as unresponsive to all the questions put to it by human wisdom. In short, Mr. Robinson is a thinker, and his poetry is the inner brooding of a mind that retires within itself. This is the New England attitude which Mr. Lindsay largely despises. He, on the contrary, affirms loudly that he was born a Southerner, two blocks south of Mason's and Dixon's line, and he claims Poe as the chief influence on his work. But Poe himself, for all his jingles, was a transcendentalist—witness "Eureka"—and his objection to the New England type of transcendentalism was probably that it was not clear enough. Mr. Lindsay does not understand Poe, or rather, he has not shared the inner torment and thwarted desire that made Poe what he was. He looks on life only as far as the surface, and the surface of life is admittedly an attractive spectacle if we are capable of assuming that everything underneath that surface is well. If not, we are presumably in peril of losing our souls; and Mr. Lindsay is very much concerned with saving every soul with which he comes into contact. Perhaps for that very reason too much of his work seems to rest upon values that are merely ephemeral. In fifty years time intelligent people will still read Robinson; it is to be doubted if anyone except the local patriots of Springfield will trouble themselves very much about the collected works of Vachel Lindsay.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER.

SHORTER NOTICES.

THE reprinting of Wilfrid Wilson Gibson's three books in one, "Daily Bread,"¹ will add little to his reputation as a poet; despite the fact that the present reissue is a revision of the entire collection of crudely inarticulate lyrics and semi-metrical, choppy and sometimes hackneyed short stories in verse, and is a very marked improvement on the original. To read-

¹ "Daily Bread." Wilfrid Wilson Gibson. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$1.75.

ers of "Livelihood," 1917, and the somewhat harsher "Battle and Other Poems" of 1915, no amount of cooking over by a cannier Mr. Gibson can do more than emphasize the essential doughiness of his earlier experiments. Indeed, with the spluttering dimeters and trimeters now cast back into the more dignified pentameters of Wordsworth's "The Leech Gatherer," Mr. Gibson's sentimentality (which fortunately has not proved altogether incurable) seems all the more damning. In 1912, in this country, an audience that had been nourished on Ella Wheeler Wilcox and Mr. Braithwaite's annual anthology, was all lined up, mouths open, to partake of the very young Mr. Gibson's much too easily prepared "Daily Bread." In 1923, the best thing that can be said of him is that he will still appeal to lovers of "Enoch Arden" and "The Village Blacksmith."

L. C. W.

WHEN a dramatist can write plays that are equally suitable for marionettes and living interpreters, he seems to have established a medium which is wellnigh fool-proof. As a matter of fact, Mr. Alfred Kreymborg's "Puppet Plays"¹ possess a curiously impersonal poetic quality, a "contrapuntal ritual," in his phrase, which lies partly in the words and partly in the arrangement. This factor is perhaps the author's chief contribution to the form of verse-drama with which he is primarily concerned; it is elfish and bizarre, and frequently highly effective. The impression which it makes in the theatre is somewhat metronomic; but the sympathetic reader corrects this in his own mind. Mr. Gordon Craig, who contributes an introduction to the volume, thinks that these marionette plays would act better than they read, but the reverse is nearer the truth. The thread of drama is sometimes too slight for the harsh medium of tinsel and footlights; Mr. Kreymborg requires a delicate setting in the reader's fancy.

L. B.

MR. DHAN GOPAL MUKERJI, who has written his autobiography² in English for Americans, offers his readers a valuable introduction to certain recondite aspects of Indian existence. He has selected for emphasis those qualities in the education of a young Brahmin that are typical of his caste, and that focus the life of all India. In India, as he points out, children are taught that life is cosmocentric, not homocentric, and that the personal will is but part of the universal will. As in America, they are brought up to comply with the habits and traditions of their race and caste; with the difference that all customary, ritualistic ways of behaviour are related directly and imaginatively to their origin as symbolic expressions of the spiritual life. Formula for its own sake is not adhered to; form is a pliant and living thing, because it embodies spirit; and freedom of spirit, "playing with God," is the state of being that all strive to attain. This development of holiness is dependent on no outside circumstance and no one wishes to oppose it. All paths lead to God; choose your own without coercion—that is the belief of the Hindu; whereas we, fighting for freedom from extrinsic restraints, can not effect this, since we do not postulate that inner freedom which conquers what is by denying it. In America the conscious mind is deified; and the conscious mind is largely made up of external impressions and of reactions to external things; thus it is bound by them. If the forces of the unconscious mind are recognized, it is by an attempt to subjugate them and drive them into comparatively superficial grooves of thought. The Indian relies on his subconscious mind; he desires to obliterate the conscious mind, and with it the world, and to lose himself in the universal element which he believes dwells within him. Obviously the very effort tends to give him self-sufficiency and a freedom unimpaired by extraneous happenings. Mr. Mukerji resents the Indian nationalist who wishes his country to fight the British rule while adopting its imperialistic methods and mechanical devices. He denies that industrial civilization has any value for India. Non-resistance to the accidents of life, and spiritual expansion and fortitude are his credo. In comparing India and America, he remarks that the differences between the two schemes of living are so great that they must meet in the end.

E. G.

¹ "Puppet Plays." Alfred Kreymborg. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$1.75.

² "Caste and Outcast." Dahn Gopal Mukerji. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. \$3.00.

AND here is Burning Mussolini singing of the Isles of Greece, long after we thought Turkey had melted them to a mere spot. (Every little conflict has a Sarajevo all its own!) * * * Over in England we are told that the Duke of Northumberland is hammering out a Fascism of pure Britannia metal. * * * The French with some 48,000 millionaires (paper-franc variety) seem to be doing a little second-story work (the subject invites the argot of the underworld) with their old college chums, Stinnes, Thyssen, von Haniel, *et al.*

Meantime, the League of Nations is stroking its false whiskers and supporting a hungry and prolific secretariat at the old stand in Geneva, Wisconsin — or is it Switzerland? * * * We forgot to say that twenty-nine entries have been made for the vacant place in the World Court. The contest will be a hot one, and we will watch the ticker eagerly. * * * The only news that leaks out of Washington is that cabinet meetings have been abandoned because they make the populace nervous, that stability has displaced normalcy, and that the new President's stock has slumped.

Our metropolitan newspapers, with their pretty sense of balance, devote columns to the demise of a rich American lady who married a Continental prince, to the successor to Mr. Harding's dog, to the shooting of "Kid Dropper" and to various and sundry matters of equal import.

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